Memory and Materiality – submerged, exhumed, displaced:
The re-emerging difficult heritage of the former forced labour camp Allach

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A Thesis
In the Department
of History

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (History) at
Concordia University Montreal, Quebec, Canada

February 2022

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Abstract

Memory and Materiality – submerged, exhumed, displaced: The re-emerging difficult heritage of the World War II German former forced labour camp Allach
Myriam B. Gerber Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2022

The forced labour camp Allach, outside of Munich, Germany, was the third-largest of a network of 140 Nazi era subcamps of the main camp Dachau, and was created specifically to provide the labour force for the nearby airplane engine production plant of the corporation BMW. By 1944/45 conditions in the camp became catastrophic as a result of overcrowding, malnourishment, abuse and diseases, so that when the US army liberated the camp on April 30th 1945, dead bodies "were piled up like kindling," and mass graves were created in the area of the so-called "Jewish camp." After the end of the Second World War, the area of the former forced labour camp Allach was repurposed, until in the 1950s the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld was created on site to provide a permanent settlement for refugees, expellees and displaced persons. Although corpses were removed from the mass graves in the 1950s, in 2017, 12 human skeletal remains were discovered unexpectedly on site during archaeological excavations which were undertaken in preparation for a major housing development. After it was determined that the remains were not of Jewish heritage, and that no evidence for mass graves had been found, the skeletons were exhumed and reburied in a local cemetery; the site now awaits rezoning permission by the city of Munich. Local memory activists have lobbied extensively for a memorial project, which has been deemed not feasible by the city; instead, the mnemonic and material traces of the site have now been incorporated into exhibitions in the memorial site Dachau and in the BMW corporate museum. By building on the concept of "dead body politics", I propose that the removal and reburial of the human remains of the Allach site highlights the ambivalence, which is inherent in these disturbing, forgotten and the oftentimes hidden remnants of the Holocaust that haunt the German urban, suburban and rural landscape in a form of enduringly "difficult heritage/knowledge." This stands in sharp contrast to Germany's much- lauded *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung*[1] which can perhaps be considered as "comfortable horrible."[2]

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[1] The German term *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* can perhaps be loose translated as the engagement of a nation with a particularly problematic aspects of its recent history, particularly in the German context with the era of National Socialism. Otherwise, it has also been defined as the politics, discourses and public debates in relation to National Socialism which address the aspects of guilt, and the struggle to 'overcome' a problematic past.[1] More recently, scholars have suggested that the occasion centenary of the end of the German empire in 2019 offers an opportunity "for serious German engagement to come to terms with its colonial past. While the very nature of centennials is the opportunity to reflect on the past and the construction of historical narratives, 2019 represents the start of a deeper engagement with colonial history and its global implications. The way this has shaped up is through discussions on repatriation of human remains and return of colonial artefacts" in Jeremia J. Garsha, "Expanding Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung? German Repatriation of Colonial Artefacts and Human Remains," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 22, Iss. 1 (2019): 46-61. For other definitions also see: Duden – die deutsche Rechtschreibung. Dudenredaktion (Bibliographisches Institut, Mannheim, Dudenverlag, 2006); Wulf Kantsteiner, "Mandarins in the Public Sphere: Vergangeheits-bewaeltigung and the Paradigm of Social History in the Federal Republic of Germany," *German Politics & Society*, Vol. 17, Iss. 3 (1999): 84-120; Michael Kohlstruck, *Zwischen Erinnerung und Geschichte: Der Nationalsozialismus und die jungen Deutschen* (Metropol, 1997).

[2] Edward Linenthal, *Preserving Memory: the struggle to create America's Holocaust Museum* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), p. 267.

Acknowledgements

My Ph.D. was financially supported by several fellowships, including a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship; a Azrieli Foundation Graduate Fellowship in Holocaust Studies from the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies at Concordia University Montreal, Quebec; a Naim Mahlab Fellowship from the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies, Concordia University Montreal; and two Kanfi-Holzbaur Awards, also from the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies, Concordia University Montreal; as well as graduate fellowships from Concordia University Montreal.

While financial support is vital, specifically while undertaking research abroad, without the support from scholars, professionals, and individuals who, as a result of their specialist knowledge in the field, this work would have not been possible. First and foremost, I am sincerely grateful to my supervisors Professors Erica Lehrer, Matthew Penney and Steven High, for their ongoing support, encouragement and challenging and inspiring feedback throughout the different stages of my doctoral studies. I am also particularly thankful to a number of individuals who, at times through casual conversations, provided information which became a vital element in my analyses, namely: Professor Barbara Lorenzkowski at Concordia University, Montreal; Professor Paul Jaskot at Duke University; Professor Gabriel Finder at University of Virginia; Mr. Herbert Finder; and Lukas Meisel, PhD candidate at University of Haifa.

I also want to specifically thank the following individuals for their time, efforts and interest in my research: Mr. Klaus Mai and Mrs. Gerlinde Dunzinger; Dr. Gabriele Hammermann, Dr. Andrea Riedle, Andre Scharf, und Stefan Jost, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau; Dr. Jochen Haberstroh, *Bayerisches Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege*; Dr. Angela Hermann und Dr. Paul-Mortiz Rabe, *NS-Dokumentationzentrum Muenchen*; Dr. Sabine Schalm und Dr. Anton Biebl, *Stadt Muenchen*; Dr. Andreas Heusler, *Stadtarchiv Muenchen*; Dr. Jascha Maerz, *Stiftung Bayerischer Gedenkstaetten*; Dr. Manfred Grunert, Stefan Behr, Dr. Andreas Braun, Mario Riederer und Ruth Standfuss, BMW Group; Eva von Steinburg, *Abendzeitung*; Helmut Zeller, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*; Anusch und Johannes Thiel, Ludwigsfeld; Oliver Krmadjian und Barbara Schroeder, Ludwigsfeld; Libuše Vepřek, Ludwig *Maximilians Universitaet Muenchen*; Richard Volkmann, *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Muenchen und Oberbayern*; Franziska Immler, Dr. Nadine Carlichi-Witjes and Dr. Kristin von Heyking, Anthroarch; Dr. Sikko Neupert, Buero Fuer Archaeologie Neupert, Kozik & Simm GbR; Josef Meier-Scupin; Christian Ude, mayor of Munich; as well as the staff in the United Nations Archive in New York City; the archive at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; and the National Archives, Maryland.

Finally, I owe a special thank you to my husband Nigel Hedge, who supported my doctoral studies by moving across the country with me (and back), and who provided tireless encouragement, patiently listening ears, and countless meals. Without his support, this dissertation would not have been possible. A great thank you also to my sons Timon and Jonas, who always encouraged my interest, and were willing to listen when I lapsed into monologues on my ongoing research. And finally, I would also like to thank my graduate colleagues Hugo Rueda and Kathryn Boschmann for their feedback, encouragement, and support.

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PRELUDE

In August 2015, a Munich local newspaper announced the concerns of a local citizen, Mr. Klaus Mai, that mass graves with potentially Jewish victims stemming from the former forced labour camp Allach might be buried under a junk yard in the small suburb Ludwigsfeld.[3] The need for further investigations was supported by Dr. Charlotte Knobloch, a Holocaust survivor, president of the Jewish community of Munich and Upper Bavaria and former vice president of the World Jewish Congress, as well as of the European Jewish Congress and president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.[4] By July 2016, the weekly newspaper of the Central Council of Jews in Germany announced that archeological excavations in the Ludwigsfeld had started, but in November 2016 it was announced that during the excavations no mass graves had been discovered. In October 2017, local papers reported that during excavations in a different area on site, 12 human skeletal remains had been discovered in the area of the former so-called "Jewish camp," while a press notice by the *NS-Dokumentationszentrum* Muenchen announced that the concern over mass graves on the property could not be confirmed.[5] The archaeological excavations where thereby concluded, the remains re-buried on a local cemetery, and the property now awaits rezoning by the city for a future housing development, a pressing concern in the quickly expanding (and expensive) metropolis Munich.

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[3] Kathrin Hildebrand, "*Liegt unter diesem Gerümpel ein KZ-Massengrab*?" *Merkur*, 11.08.2015, https://www.merkur.de/lokales/muenchen/stadt-muenchen/kz-massengrab-ludwigsfeld-aussenlager-konzentrationslagers-dachau-5336254.html; Accessed December 2, 2017; Helmut Zeller, "*NS-Massengrab in Allach*," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 24.09.2015, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/ns-massengrab-in-allach-vergessenes-verbrechen-1.2661774 Accessed December 2, 2017.

[4] Zeller, "*NS-Massengrab in Allach*."

[5] Eva von Steinburg, "*Das LKA untersucht die Toten - KZ-Aussenlager: Zwoelf Skelette in Allach gefunde*," *Abendzeitung Muenchen*, 23.10.2017, https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/muenchen/stadtviertel/kz-allach-zwoelf-skelette-gefunden-lka-untersucht-die-toten-art-542280 Accessed October 25, 2017.
Der Standard, "*Untersuchungsbericht Kein Massengrab im KZ-Außenlager Allach bei München gefunden*," 19.10.2017, https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000066339335/kein-massengrab-im-kz-aussenlager-allach-bei-muenchen-gefunden Accessed October 25, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation focuses on the re-emerging material and mnemonic history of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach near Munich as a case study to examine the development and dynamics of memory discourses, stakeholder responses and initiatives, and the struggle over the interpretation and representation of this difficult heritage site in the context of Germany's esteemed process of *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* [coming to terms with the past]. The consequences of the nation's top-down approach to the dark Nazi past are reflected in its instrumentalization by the very German corporations who profited from the exploitation of forced labourers: their engagement with this difficult heritage is used today to highlight their social commitment and thus to enhance their brands.[6]

My research illustrates that specific aspects of the Nazi past – such as an inconveniently located mass grave with potentially Jewish victims in the suburb of the bustling metropolis of Munich [notably coined "A Metropolis with Heart"][7] remain deeply uncomfortable – even unutterable – in the German context, calling into question the nation's much praised approach to overcoming its difficult past. To manage the potentially disruptive and unsettling agency of such heritage, state-funded memory institutions and memorial sites incorporate this past into their established overarching historical narratives, thereby effectively removing the troubling past from the public sphere, where it might catalyze important 'memory work', and placing it instead into an 'appropriate' environment, where it is domesticated, and even serves as a positive contribution to the reputation of commercial enterprises.[8]

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[6] In history writing, the 'top-down approach' of writing historical narratives tended to focus on prominent figures, architecture, or major events, while the lives of ordinary people were only included in academic research by the beginning of the 20th century. In the German context, the 'top-down approach' to the commemoration of the Holocaust refers to the highly visible ritualized approach to this difficult past which has been implemented on a federal level, and finds expression in countless memorials and museums dedicated to the topic across the German landscape, Germany's national memory to the murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, as well as official gestures, such as Angela Merkel's visit to the Auschwitz memorial on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the camp on January 27th 1945. History 'from below' in the German context in relation to the Holocaust refers to the grassroot activism of ordinary citizens, which has led to the creation of countless small memorials and initiatives across the nation. The 'top-down approach' to the memory of the Holocaust, however, is not necessarily reflected across Germany's citizens and its topography; for example, historian Jacob S. Eder notes that a cenotaph dedicated to Alfred Jodl, who was tried as a war criminal and sentenced to death, is located in the cemetery on in Lake Chiemsee. See: Jacob S. Eder, "Germany is often praised for facing up to its Nazi past. But even there, the memory of the Holocaust is still up for debate," *Time*, January 27, 2020, Online https://time.com/5772360/german-holocaust-memory/ Accessed April 10, 2021.

[7] Translated: *Eine Weltstadt mit Herz*. This term was proposed as an advertising slogan in 1962, proposed by housewife Dorit Lilowa in the context of a competition by the Munich tourist association. Following an emerging trend toward an increased marketing of cities as tourist destinations, the term implies not only that Munich is an internationally recognized metropolis. At the same time, the addition "*mit Herz*" seeks to dispel any negative associations which are often made with large cities, such as anonymity and stress, and instead to suggest positive connotations, such as friendliness, cosiness, and quality of life. Arguably, the slogan also served to disassociate the city from its reputation as the "capital of the Nazi movement."

[8] In her work on 'non-sites of memory' (specifically unmarked gravesites in Central and Eastern Europe), Roma Sendyka notes that while the memory of such sites is not marked on the level of material culture, such sites nevertheless impact their surroundings by "way of negation, in turning away or turning a blind eye, and even through such radical gestures as littering and vandalizing: these acts appear to be related to ritual acts, magic, primal acts intended for cursed spaces, taboo places, which our culture has associated since Roman times (if not before) with death and catastrophe." See Roma Sendyka, "Prism: Understanding Non-Sites of Memory," *Teksty Drugie*, Vol. 1-2 (2013): 323-344, p. 325.

At the same time, my analysis supports Élisabeth Anstett's and Jean-Marc Dreyfus proposal that the materiality of victims of genocides and histories of violence are assuming a new significance as a result of the 'forensic turn' and the final disappearance of the survivors and eyewitnesses.[9] I suggest that the inclusion of information on the individual human remains which had been discovered during the archaeological excavations in the Ludwigsfeld in 2017 in a special exhibition in the Dachau memorial site points to a shifting in perceptions of the dead bodies of Holocaust victims in the German context, and also suggests that specifically intact human remains may function as 'witnesses.'[10] At the same time, the inclusion of this topic only in the exhibition at the Dachau memorial site but not in the new exhibition at the BMW museum also indicates that such representations may not be possible in all settings.

Lastly, my exploration of the representation of the history of the former forced labour camp Allach in the context of the BMW corporate museum engages with Erica Lehrer's intriguing question whether "there can be a conciliatory heritage."[11] Using Kazimierz, the historical Jewish district of Cracow, Poland, as an example, Lehrer considers "heritage spaces and landscapes as key sites for conciliatory civil society development through meaningful engagement with difficult histories."[12] Rather than through official national processes and structures, meaningful reconciliation is something that emerges organically through processes and interactions "that unfold[s] in daily life, within and between aggrieved communities."[13] Heritage sites have a reconciliatory potential precisely in that they allow for the "daily telling and living of our unique and overlapping individual stories," as they "embody counterhegemonic political and moral concerns."[14] Building on Lehrer's exploration of 'conciliatory heritage,' I argue that the site of the former forced labour camp Allach, specifically the location in which the human remains were discovered, has already assumed this function to a degree in that local activists – many of whom were survivors, or are descendants of survivors – have initiated "encounter, dialogue, cultural activism and preservation."[15] Specifically through the discovery of the human remains, the site could serve what Lehrer refers to as "subaltern memory projects:"[16] the memory of the local survivors (and to some extent their descendants) who have a connection to the historical site through their own experiences; the memory of those who perished on site, and whose remains provide a material continuity between the past and the present; and finally, local residents who do not have any specific memories relating to the difficult history of the site. A memorial project in the location of the former forced labour camp Allach would thus provide an opportunity which would encourage and facilitate dialogue and interaction between these different groups of the living, while at the same time acknowledging the presence of the dead. Through the removal of the

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[9] Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus, "Introduction: Why Exhume? Why Identify?" in *Human Remains and Identification: Mass Violence, Genocide, and the 'Forensic Turn'*, ed. Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015); Jean-Marc Dreyfus, "Renationalizing bodies? The French search mission for the corpses of deportees to Germany, 1946-58," in *Human Remains and Mass Violence: Methodological Approaches* ed. Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus (Manchester University Press, 2014), 129-145.

[10] I suggest that while the ashes of the millions of cremated victims are also remains, they represent a rather more abstract form of 'witness' which may make it more difficult to relate to as an individual, whereas an intact skeleton, for example, which exhibits evidence of the trauma suffered by the person could potentially provide another access point to engagement.

[11] Erica Lehrer, "Can there be a conciliatory heritage?" *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 16, Iss. 4-5 (2010): 269-288.

[12] *Ibid*, 269.

[13] *Ibid.*, 272.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*, 270.

human remains from their original site, and through the transference of the memory of the site to the Dachau memorial site as well as to the BMW corporate museum, the potential of the site as a site of reconciliation has been eliminated, precisely as both spaces are not meant to allow for daily interactions and engagements, but instead function outside the spaces of everyday life. Building on Lehrer's theory of reconciliatory heritage, I argue that museums – and the placing of local memory discourses into museums – disrupt the reconciliatory potential, as they seek to create a coherent, homogenous historical narrative to create a vantage point from which to consider the chain of historical events, rather than to allow for heterogenous, diverse and contrary narratives. By incorporating the memory of the exploitation of forced labourers into their respective museums, German corporations are aligning themselves with Germany's national memory discourses, thereby mimicking the top-down approach of the nation state.

Over the past two decades, the memory of the Third Reich has gradually become integrated into the corporate memory of German companies to an extent where it has become a reference point, an expression of responsibility, and, arguably, a positive asset.[17] The public and visible incorporation of the difficult heritage of forced labour into memory discourses of German corporations bears marked similarities to the maturation and transformation of German Holocaust memory: after a long period of "structural amnesia," German companies began slowly to acknowledge their dark pasts, though only in response to local, national and international changes.[18] Macdonald notes that

> "[s]elf-disclosure in the political realm is often couched in a discourse and valuing of 'transparency'. While now frequently understood as a marker of democracy and a good itself […], transparency is also part of the way in which contrition is usually performed. That is, apologizing for past wrongs also requires a bringing of those wrongs into view."

The incorporation of the difficult heritage of forced labour into the corporate space of the very company which exploited the forced labourers may, arguably, be considered a similar move; yet, as I have suggested above, it is the specific context of the company's corporate museum, which effectively has a 'neutralizing' effect on the potentially unsettling past, thereby raising the important question whether the acknowledgement of past wrong-doings in this specific space can have a conciliatory impact at all.

The epilogue of this dissertation engages with the question whether and how difficult heritage can have a conciliatory impact through the methodology "curatorial dreaming," developed by Shelley Butler and Erica Lehrer.[19] Through the development of an imagined exhibition, which exists outside of the limitations of the actual corporate museum in a creative way, I engage with and address aspects that I critique in my analyses, and also explore how the conciliatory potential of this difficult heritage may function positively (?) in different contexts.

1. Historical context

The subcamp complex Allach was created to provide the labour force for the nearby airplane engine production plant of the corporation BMW in overlapping phases between March 1942

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[17] Dirk Rupnow, *Vernichten und Erinnern. Spuren nationalsozialistischer Gedaechtnispolitik* (Wallstein-Verlag, Goettingen 2005), 168.
[18] Jan Assmann, "Ancient Egyptian antijudaism: A case of distorted memory," in D. L. Schacter (ed.), *Memory distortion: How minds, brains, and societies reconstruct the past,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 365-385.
[19] Shelley Butler and Erica Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams: Critics Imagine Exhibition*, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

and March 1943. This camp was the third-largest of a network of 140 subcamps of the main camp Dachau, and about 17,000 prisoners had been forced to work for BMW. The site, today's *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld, is a small borough about 25 km north-west of Munich, and 7 km south of Dachau. Initially planned as living quarters for foreign and forced labourers, the camp expanded over time and included multiple subcamps. The individual subcamps housed different categories of prisoners; for example, the *Operation Todt* (OT) camp Karlsfeld[20] (added in spring 1944) was exclusively for male Jewish concentration camp prisoners who were deported to the Allach site from Eastern Europe – this area was eventually known as the "Jewish camp." These prisoners were utilized for the construction of a massive bunker site, and their brutal treatment was in alignment with the practice 'extermination through labour.'[21] Over the course of the months and weeks prior to the liberation of the camp at the end of April 1945, the camp complex was flooded with incoming transports of concentration camp prisoners, deported from camps in the East, while, at the same time, food supplies for the tens of thousands of prisoners and the hygienic conditions deteriorated catastrophically. By the time the camp was liberated by the American army, dead bodies were "piled up like kindling," and many more prisoners perished as the result of a typhus epidemic during the weeks following liberation. [22] The dead bodies of the prisoners who perished during the weeks prior to and around the time of liberation were buried in mass graves in the area of the former Jewish camp. Over the course of the following years, areas of the site were repurposed by the American army, as well as an internment camp for German Prisoners of War, as a preliminary shelter for expellees and refugees and an emigration camp. In the 1950s, the new settlement Ludwigsfeld was built on site to provide a permanent home for a few hundred former Prisoners of War (PoWs), refugees, former forced labourers and other displaced persons (DPs). After reports of neglect, the area of the mass graves was eventually turned into a small camp cemetery, which was eventually dissolved, the dead bodies exhumed and reburied elsewhere.

2. Ethnographic context

Although efforts were made for several years by former survivors such as Max Mannheimer and local residents to commemorate the site and its history, neither the city of Munich nor the

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[20] The OT was a Nazi era civil and military engineering group, which was named for its founder Fritz Todt, who was a senior Nazi figure and engineer. This organization oversaw a wide range of construction and engineering projects in Germany as well as occupied Europe and became notorious for its ruthless exploitation of forced labour. While the OT was in operation from 1933 onward, it considerably increased its projects from 1943 on under Albert Speer in his role as Minister of Armaments and Munitions. The OT was incorporated into Speer's ministry, and began to construct air-raid shelters, bombed-out buildings, and most significantly underground refineries and armaments factories. From 1942 until the end of the war, the vast majority of OT labourers were PoWs and forced labourers from occupied countries. From the spring of 1944 onward, Hitler had ordered the deployment of 100,000 Jews from Eastern European countries, such as Hungary and Rumania, to Germany to work as "less-than-slaves" on bunker construction projects.

[21] *Vernichtung durch Arbeit* (extermination through labour) refers to strategies used by Nazi leadership as part of the "Final Solution;" during the Wannsee conference in 1942 it was decided that Jews able to perform labour were to be utilized for various projects, with the expectation that the hard labour, insufficient nutrition and brutal conditions would lead to the 'natural' premature death of the workers. Although the phrase was not commonly used among Nazi leadership, it was used during the post-war Nuremberg trials. See also Marc Buggeln, S*lave Labor in Nazi Concentration Camps* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

[22] David Kennedy, ed. *The Library of Congress World War II Companion* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 695.

memorial site Dachau demonstrated interest in the creation of a memorial.[23] A constellation of circumstances - the pressing need to develop further housing for the expanding city of Munich, the purchase of a section of land associated with the former camp site by a major developer, and the increasingly visible advocacy of local memory activist Mr. Klaus Mai - led to an archaeological excavation of the area in 2016/2017. After the discovery of the human remains, the *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau [Dachau camp association], which was founded in 1946 by former inmates, has filed charges for disturbance of the dead, arguing that the skeletons should have remained in situ, according to the German *Graebergesetz* [law relating to specific graves].[24] The *Stiftung Bayerischer Gedenkstaetten* [foundation of Bavarian memorial sites] is by state law responsible to ensure the respectful treatment of the victims and rejects the charge by arguing that at the time of the archaeological excavations, the area was not a cemetery and therefore no disturbance of the dead has taken place.[25] In the context of the archaeological research, the city of Munich and the memorial site Dachau commissioned a feasibility study in early 2018, to explore the possibilities for a *Dokumentationsort*[26] at the site of the former sub-camp Allach. Due to the complex constellation of property ownership, the need for housing developments, as well as limitations in the local infrastructure, no steps toward a local memorial project have been taken by any of the three key stakeholders: the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, the city of Munich and the BMW Group.[27]

In 2020, BMW added the new section *Ein Ort der Erinnerung* [a place of memory] to their permanent exhibition in their corporate museum in Munich, and the quiet opening was announced in an article of the *Bayerische Rundfunk* with the headline: "*'Stille tut uns gut': So zeigt das BMW-Museum die NS-Geschichte*" [Silence is good for us: This is how the BMW

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[23] Max Mannheimer (Feb. 6th 1920 – Sept. 23rd 2016), born in the former Czechoslovakia, was deported with his family to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943, where Mannheimer lost his entire family with the exception of one brother. Mannheimer himself survived three selections, before he was deported in 1943 to clear rubble in the Warsaw ghetto, and finally to Allach. In early 1945, Mannheimer and his brother were sent to the Muehldorf subcamp, where they were liberated. Mannheimer continued to live near Munich until his death. From the mid-1980s onward, Mannheimer began to give lectures to school classes. Mannheimer became honorary member of the organization Against Forgetting – For Democracy, as well as chairman of the *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau and vice president of the *Comite International de Dachau*, and he invited Chancellor Merkel in 2013 to a visit of the memorial site Dachau. He received numerous honors and awards, including the Knight of the French Legion of Honor, the Auschwitz Cross, the Federal Cross of Merit, the Bavarian Order of Merit, and an honorary doctorate from the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. Mannheimer was instrumental in the efforts which have been made in the Ludwigsfeld toward a memorial project, and it was due to his initiative that the commemorative plaques were mounted in 1997 on the single remaining barracks. See also: Max Mannheimer, *Spaetes Tagebuch* (Pendo Verlag, Zuerich, 2005).

[24] Claudia Schury, "*Dachau erstattet Anzeige: Nach Fund von zwoelft Skeletten: Streit um Totenruhe der KZ-Opfer*," *Hallo Muenchen*, 03. 02. 2018 https://www.hallo-muenchen.de/muenchen/west/ludwigsfeld-ort29006/nach-fund-zwoelf-skeletten-streit-totenruhe-kz-opfer-9576674.html Accessed February 15, 2018; note: This federal law, enacted in 1952, states that graves related to the victims of war and dictatorship have to permanently remain and are to be preserved by individual states.[24] While the skeletons were discovered in August 2017, the *Lagergemeinschaft* was only informed in October and at this point, the remains had already been exhumed, placed into individual coffins and were stored in a freight container. Victim associations, such as the *Lagergemeinschaft* and the International Dachau Committee (*Comite International de Dachau*) were not consulted in the process and simply presented with the facts.

[25] Helmut Zeller, "*Fund im Ludwigsfeld: Die Toten finden keine Ruhe*," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 24.01.2018, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/dachau/fund-in-ludwigsfeld-die-toten-finden-keine-ruhe-1.3838128 Accessed January 31, 2018.

[26] Translated literally: a place which documents the historical site [my translation].

[27] Frankonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie fuer einen Dokumentationsort zum ehemaligen KZ-Aussenlagerkomplex Allach*. June 6, 2018 https://www.muenchen.de/rathaus/Stadtverwaltung/Kulturreferat/Stadtgeschichte/KZ-Aussenlager-Allach.html Accessed June 10, 2018.

museum shows the Nazi past, my translation].[28] The headline was accompanied by a photograph of Mr. Ralph Huber, director of the BMW museum and communication BMW Group Classic, Andreas Braun, curator of the BMW museum, and Fred Jakobs, director of the BMW Group archive, in front of a white banner which states "Human Dignity is Sacrosanct, Article 1 of the Basic Constitutional Law."

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Ralph Huber (links), Andreas Braun (Mitte) und BMW-Group Classics Archivar Fred Jakobs (rechts)

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Figure 1

Similarly, the memorial site Dachau added a temporary special exhibition *Zeitspuren* [traces of the past] to their permanent display. While the exhibition at the BMW museum provides information on the site of the Allach site as well on another forced labour site (Eisenach/ Duererhof), the exhibition *Zeitspuren* illustrates the history of the Allach through artefacts which were discovered on site. This display also includes a showcase which provides information on the findings of the human remains.

3. Theoretical approaches, methodology, and sources

The re-emerging difficult heritage of the former subcamp complex Allach offers intriguing possibilities and challenges in that an exclusive disciplinary focus on a specific aspect of the site may foreclose the exploration of other important elements; for example, a focus on the historical context of the site may not consider specific socio-political continuities which inform and shape the contemporary local community. At the same time, when researchers encounter a heritage or historical site or a museum, they tend to arrive 'after the fact,' that is, once a site or museum is already in place and narratives are established. Naturally, many of the nuances of negotiations, interpretations and changes to the historical narrative which accompany the processes of the emergence of a memorial site may no longer be available or accessible. To be able, as an academic researcher, to witness the often year-long struggle and back-and-forth between

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[28] Peter Jungblut, "*'Stille tut uns gut!' So zeigt das BMW museum die NS-Geschichte*," *Bayerischer Rundfunk*, 06.06. 2020, https://www.br.de/nachrichten/kultur/stille-tut-uns-gut-so-zeigt-das-bmw-museum-die-ns-geschichte,S0xmIVg Accessed June 15, 2020.

[29] *Ibid.*

different interested parties alongside the physical manifestation (as well as absence of) a memorial site is thus a unique as well as challenging opportunity and provide – I strongly believe – a contribution to our knowledge in relation to heritage and memory. The site of the former subcamp complex and its history allows a detailed exploration on how mnemonic and material traces of a seemingly 'forgotten' past can re-emerge, how different publics, agencies and stakeholders engage with this past, and how different perceptions, needs and limitations inform the development of an official narrative; in the case of the Allach site, this includes early grassroot efforts to commemorate the site by local residents, the gradual involvement of institutions and interested stakeholders once enough public attention necessitated their involvement, to the incorporation of the site's history into established forms of museal representations.

To make the most of my unique temporal vantage point, I applied a range of analytical tools to examine and illustrate the many diverse facets that inform the site and its related mnemonic and material discourses. The most interesting aspects of the site emerge from the communication between academic disciplines, and, correspondingly, the interdisciplinary approach I chose to investigate the site is intended to draw connections between specific aspects which so far in the existing academic work on the location and its history have been unexplored: for example, approaches of critical museology let me examine closely the incorporation of difficult heritage into a corporate museal space; building on Christopher Mauriello's and Cora Sol Goldstein's investigation of the confrontation of Germans with the dead victims of the Third Reich, I take a corporeal/body-centric approach to explore perceptions of, responses to, and engagement with the dead bodies discovered in 2017 at Ludwigsfeld; and finally, by taking a material culture studies approach, I seek to examine how memory works if mnemonic and material traces of the past are exhumed from their original context and placed in another context, specifically incorporating the history of a lesser known site into an established memorial site, and thereby into national as well as international Holocaust memory discourses.[30] By drawing from the fields of history, cultural anthropology, memory studies, heritage studies, material culture studies and museum studies, I expand existing bodies of knowledge – for example, the confrontation of German civilians with the dead bodies of the victims – by exploring the role of the dead bodies of Nazi victims in contemporary Germany.

In addition to this interdisciplinary approach, I seek to be mindful of the deeply entrenched in hierarchies of power that informed and shaped not only the former forced labour camp Allach and the site's diverse residents. While over the course of decades agents such as the BMW corporation, the city of Munich, and the memorial site Dachau have made far-reaching decisions regarding the usage of the site, the experience of the local residents has rarely been taken into consideration. These dynamics extent from the time of the camp's operation to the present. In an attempt to dismantle the existing imbalance of power, I specifically position myself as a German-born, non-Jewish, now Canadian academic researcher in order to call into question the power of the distanced 'expert' in the production of knowledge and historical narratives, as such approaches often omit the situatedness of the researcher in relation to the subject.

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[30] Christoper E. Mauriello, *Forced Confrontation: The Politics of Dead Bodies in Germany at the End of WWII* (Lexington Books, 2017); Cora Sol Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye: American Visual Propaganda in Occupied Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 31.

i. Memory studies

The relatively young field of memory studies is already vast and constantly evolving, and while it is at times critiqued for its conceptual clarity, over the past three decades, the field has emerged as a distinct interdisciplinary entity in the humanities and social sciences, which finds expression in myriad publications, institutions, organizations, and conferences. In the most general terms, memory studies explore what and why individuals and groups remember and forget, as well as how memory evolves and is passed on through language, material culture, and cultural practices. Over the course of several decades, scholars have developed various conceptualizations of memory, including, for example, Maurice Halbwachs' theory of "collective memory," which provided one of the first theoretical considerations of the relationship between memory and identity. Halbwachs theorized that each individual shares memories with specific social groups, and in turn, such collective memories can create a sense of identity and belonging.[31] The concept of "cosmopolitan memory" was developed by Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider to describe a form of collective memory which emerges through processes of globalization. This cosmopolitan or global memory of the is expressed, for example, through international alliances, events, museums and memorial sites, visual iconography, and social trends such as Holocaust tourism.[32] Cosmopolitan memory transcends national boundaries, while, at the same time, it exists in conjunction with national and local memory discourses.[33] Travel to sites related to the Holocaust, as well as filmic representations and displays in Holocaust museums, are closely linked to the established visual culture of the Holocaust in archival photographs and film footage which are, in turn, inspired by Holocaust sites.[34] Sites of the Holocaust, such as former concentration and extermination camps have become destinations, thereby reinforcing the connection between the visual culture of the Holocaust and Holocaust sites.[35] A "globalizing gaze" emerged in the context of what John Urry refers to as "time-space compression" as people across the globe, through the assistance of technological developments, began to produce and consume places across spatial distances.[36] A significant aspect of global Holocaust memory discourses is to 'witness' the historical events by proxy, and the belief that the commemoration of the victims, and knowledge about the events will help us to prevent similar events. Michael Rothberg's theory of "multi-directional memory" explores the competition between collective memories of historical events as well as how different memory discourses inform, borrow from each other, and cross-reference. In his work, Rothberg emphasizes how counter-memories were created by marginalized communities, thereby challenging hegemonic memory discourses, adding complexity and nuance. The Holocaust, in this context, functioned to mobilize memories of other historical injustices and genocides and that, in turn, post-colonial theories can mobilize specific aspects of the commemoration of the

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[31] Maurice Halbwachs, *On collective memory* (The University of Chicago Press, 1992).
[32] Johannes Heuman, "Promoting Global Holocaust Memory in the Era of the Cold War: The Tomb of the Unknown Jewish Martyr in Paris," *History & Memory*, Vol. 27, Iss. 1(2015): 116-153. See also Erica Lehrer, *Jewish Poland Revisited: Heritage Tourism in Unquiet Places* (Indiana University Press, 2013).
[33] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider. "Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory." *European Journal of Social Theory*. Vol. 5, No. 1 (2002): 87-106.
[34] See Myriam Gerber, "*Beyond the Memory: the era of witnessing – analyzing processes of knowledge production and memorialization of the Holocaust through the concepts of translocal assemblage and witness creation*," (MA thesis, Univesrsity of Victoria, BC, 2016).
[35] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (University of California Press, 1998).
[36] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 2nd edition (Sage Publications, 2002), 141.

Holocaust, for example, continuities of racial and colonial ideologies in contemporary society, thereby adding further insight into the legacies of a fascist regime and mass violence.[37] Marianne Hirsch's theory of "post-memory" refers to the relationship between subsequent generations and the memory and cultural trauma of genocide. While those individuals who lived through the historical events have direct personal memories, the descendants access these memories through stories, images and behaviours, which, in turn, create and inform a form of memory.[38] Hirsch's concept of post-memory is specifically important in the context of my analyses, as a third-generation German-born grandchild of what might at best be termed 'bystanders' and my upbringing in West Germany informed my own complicated relationship with the Nazi era and the Holocaust; furthermore, the aspect of post-memory is also important in the context of how subsequent generations of German-born and non-German born citizens relate to this increasingly abstract knowledge and 'memory' of and relationship (or absence of) to this historical event.

Within the broad and dynamic field of memory studies, it is German memory discourses relating to the Second World War that are specifically relevant to my own research. The dynamic processes of Germany's self-conscious struggle to come to terms with its Nazi past have been well-documented, analyzed, criticized, and interpreted.[39] The commemoration of the Holocaust over the past 75 years evolved in response to internal and external influences, generational and socio-political shifts, controversy, and vastly diverse perceptions of how to remember the atrocities of the Third Reich in the country of the perpetrators. James Young has suggested that Germany's ongoing debate and the struggle to come to terms with the Nazi past is in itself a form of commemoration,[40] while at the same time, the continuation of controversy surrounding aesthetic and ethical aspects as well as political and bureaucratic struggles over responsibilities and jurisdictions indicate a high degree of anxiety over the 'right' way to remember the past.

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[37] Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, (Stanford University Press, 2009).

[38] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012), 7.

[39] David Art, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria (*New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Aleida Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity (*New York: Fordham, 2016); Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Geoff Elay, *The "Goldhagen Effect": History, Memory, Nazism – facing the German Past* (University of Michigan Press, 2000); Juergen Habermas, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historian's Debate*. MIT Press, 1991; Ulrich Herbert, *Academic and Public Discourses on the Holocaust: The Goldhagen Debate in Germany*, Vol. 17, Iss. 3 (Fall 1999): 35-53; Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Harvard University Press, 1999); Jennifer Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford University Press, California, 2006); Wulf Kantsteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory: History, Television and Politics after Auschwitz* (Ohio University Press, 2006); Siobhan Kattago, *Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity* (Praeger Publishers, 2001); Lothar Kettenacker (ed), *Ein Volk von Opfern? Die neue Debatte um den Bombenkrieg 1940-45* (Rowohlt Berlin, 2003); Bill Niven (ed), *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (John Hopkins University Press, 2000); Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust*: *History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Dominick LaCapra *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Cornell University Press, 1998); Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity* (Harvard University Press, 1998); Alexander Mitscherlich and Margarete Mitscherlich, *The Inability to Mourn. Principles of Collective Behavior*, translated by Beverly Placzek (New York: Grove Press, 1975); Robert Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany (*University of California Press, 2003); Bill Niven, Chloe Paver (eds), *Memorialization in Germany since 1945* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Caroline Wiedmer, *Claims of Memory: Representations of the Holocaust in Contemporary Germany and France* (Cornell, 1999); James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (Yale University Press, 1993).

[40] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 21.

Much of the academic work on Holocaust and German memory over the past three decades has focused on public discourses in Germany with diverse theoretical frameworks ranging from psychoanalytical theories[41] to an examination of public memorials[42] to a study of popular culture.[43] Trauma theory has been a prominent framework which has been used extensively in academic studies of German memory discourses, often linking "historical guilt" and "humiliating and traumatic events" with an all-encompassing "repressive and complicit silence" in Germany,"[44] while other approaches to the study of German memory focused on specific formative events or time periods, such as the Cold War era.[45] Scholars, such as Young, have criticized the use of trauma theory to explain group (rather than individual) psychological behavior, arguing that "to suggest that a society 'represses' memory because it is not in its interest to remember, or because it is ashamed of its memory, is to lose sight of the many other social and political forces underpinning national memory."[46]

ii. Heritage studies

Traditionally, cultural heritage referred primarily to the great and beautiful creations which celebrated the genius of humanity.[47] Heritage can be described as a form of (often historical) knowledge which is situated in specific socio-cultural frameworks and is performed, practiced, celebrated, utilized and consumed in various forms. Heritage is frequently linked closely to material culture in that it is often materialized in some form, such as structures, recordings, space or activities. At the same time, in recent years the concept of intangible heritage, such as traditions, practices, beliefs and skills, has become increasingly recognized.[48] All heritage is invariably embedded in a temporal and spatial context, and – while heritage is always something from the past - the uses and interpretations of change depending on needs, relation to time, etc. in the present.[49] Material traces of the past, such as places, structures, objects or documents can serve to represent specific aspects of the past; by implication, the absence of such mnemonic traces of the past, for examples in archives or museums, may lead to the exclusion or absence of specific communities and voices. Indeed, "structural amnesia" can be actively shaped by interested actors to erase traces of the past which may undermine the desired narrative.[50] Thus,

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[41] Assman, *Shadows of Trauma;* LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*; LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz*; LaCapra, Dominick, *Representing the Holocaust*; Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, *The Inability to Mourn.*
[42] Jordan, *Structures of Memory;* Kattago, *Ambiguous Memory*; Niven and Paver, *Memorialization in Germany*; Wiedmer, *Claims of Memory;* Young, *The Texture of Memory.*
[43] Kantsteiner, *In Pursuit of German Memory.*
[44] Aleida Assmann, "Gedächtnis als Leitbegriff der Kulturwissenschaften," in *Kulturwissenschaften: Forschung – Praxis – Positionen* eds. Lutz Musner and Gotthard Wunberg (Wien: WUV, 2002), 27-45 and 15. See also: LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*; LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz*; LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust*; Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, *The Inability to Mourn*.
[45] Herf, *Divided Memory*; Maier, *The Unmasterable Past.*
[46] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, xi.
[47] William Logan and Keir Reeves eds. *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with 'Difficult Heritage'* (Taylor & Francis, 2008).
[48] "Understanding Intangible Culture Heritage," *UNESCO*, https://en.ccunesco.ca/blog/2019/10/understanding-intangible-cultural-heritage Accessed March 1, 2020.
[49] Brian G. Ashworth and John E. Tunbridge, *Pluralising Past*s: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies (Pluto Press, 2007); Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture*; Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (Routledge, 2008).
[50] Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination (*Cambridge University Press, 2001); Michelle-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Beacon Press: 1995).

remembering and forgetting are not separate processes, but function together in a "a highly selective process which oscillates between remembering and forgetting."[51] Diverse and competing memories of past events may exist; however, if specific versions of the past are deemed irrelevant, politically disagreeable or have been silenced through structural amnesia, these mnemonic traces may be overwritten by or marginalized through dominant narratives.[52]

Like museums, heritage can serve the construction of narratives and identities, and is therefore used and produced for a multitude of purposes - such as entertainment, tourism, or political agendas – by a range of different actors. Through the performative engagement with and consumption of heritage, for example through visits of historical sites, heritage contributes to the formation of collective memory.[53] Two specific fields of interest emerged over the past three decades, namely manipulations of heritage for contemporary purposes, and the concept of "difficult heritage."

According to Laurajane Smith, heritage is not a specific object or site, but rather a process through which objects and places are utilized to transmit particular ideas to satisfy a diverse set of needs in the present.[54] Through heritage, "selected memories are inscribed into public spaces […] and the histories that it indexes are integral parts of what is presented as a shared public narrative, bolstering senses of identity and legitimacy."[55] Heritage is therefore particularly well suited to be employed for contemporary needs in political and national contexts:[56] for example, in the context of nation states, heritage is utilized and assembled in order to create group identity and social cohesion amongst its people through the celebration of specific aspects of history.[57] Certain elements, such as locations, structures or events may be used to construct a self-referential material reality in order to create a common sense of identity based on the past by focusing on "aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and/or landscapes that current generations 'must' care for" through specific management and conservation practices.[58] Due to the inherently political nature of heritage – "[a]t its simplest, all heritage is someone's heritage and therefore, logically, not someone else's" - the interpretation of the past that is provided in a specific site is reflective of contemporary national and communal needs and agendas, supported by tourism management and conservation.[59]

The concept "difficult knowledge" in relation to histories of violence and genocide was proposed by Deborah Britzman, referencing representations of social trauma in the context of curricula as well as the individual engagement with them.[60] This concept situates "difficulty" not

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[51] Steffen Iaschke and Dennis Schoeneborn "The forgotten function of forgetting: Revisiting exploration and exploitation in organizational learning," *Soziale Systeme*, Vol. 12, Iss. 1 (2006):100–120, 109.
[52] Gary Fine, *Difficult Reputations: Collective Memories of the Evil, Inept, and Controversial (C*hicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[53] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory;* John E. Tunbridge, Gregory J. Ashworth "Dissonance and the Uses of Heritage," in *Cultural Heritage: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies* ed. Laurajane Smith, Vol. 2 (1996), 206-248.
[54] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, (Routledge, 2007).
[55] Sharon Macdonald, "Unsettling memories: Intervention and controversy over difficult public heritage," in *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World* eds. Marta Anico and Elsa Peralta (Routledge, 2009), 93.
[56] Christiane Brosius and Karin M. Polit (eds) *Ritual, Heritage and Identity: the Politics of Culture and Performance in a Globalized World* (Routledge, 2011).
[57] Logan and Reeves, *Places of Pain and Shame.*
[58] Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, 29.
[59] *Ibid*, 21.
[60] Deborah Britzman, *Lost Subjects*, *Contested Objects: Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Alice Pitt and Deborah Britzman, "Speculations on qualities of difficult knowledge in teaching and learning: an experiment in psychoanalytic research," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, Vol. 16, Iss. 6 (2003): 755-776.

in a given heritage object or narrative itself, but in an individual recipient's relation to such stimuli; the difficulty is not inherent, it is situated rather in the psychological confrontation with the framework of what one already knows or believes. Successfully confronting and incorporating knowledge that is "difficult" then becomes a problem of communication. Erica Lehrer, Cynthia Milton and Monica Patterson worked with the concept "difficult knowledge" in the realm of curating, to explore the "[u]nique challenges [which] arise in attempts to frame memories and documents of violence for public displays," for example, through exhibitions. The authors explore the questions "what is difficult about difficult knowledge?" and "what [does] such knowledge do to us – or what we do with it[.]"[61] Such difficult knowledge can be explored and used to "provoke, enable, and transform," thereby generating reflection and discussion.[62]

In her seminal work *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond*, Sharon Macdonald first coined and applied the term "difficult heritage" to describe "a past that is recognized as meaningful in the present but that is also contested and awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity." Difficult heritage can unsettle and call into question established historical representations and interpretations, and "threatens to break through into the present in disruptive ways, opening up social divisions."[63] Difficult heritage may be a specific site or structure, but can also refer to historical events and ideologies, as well as to 'hidden' or 'forgotten' sites and histories. Tunbridge and Ashworth propose the term "dissonant heritage" to differentiate between the past as history, and the heritage of the past. The authors make the point that all heritage is inherently contested as often conflicting claims to the past are made by different actors for contemporary purposes.[64]

Nick Carter and Simon Martin expanded the concept of difficult heritage and suggest that the difference between 'difficult and 'dissonant' lies in in its specificity: "[a]ll difficult heritage is 'dissonant' but no all dissonant heritage is 'difficult'." Dissonant heritage focuses on the "disputes over how the past is presented and commodified for public consumption" while difficult heritage "is more concerned with questions of legacy and reception", that is, "how a society deals with the physical reminders of a discredited – and often very recent – past; and how (and why) that relationship changes over time."[65] In response to the innately political nature of heritage in general, and the unsettling quality of difficult heritage more specifically, dominant political, social, religious or ethnic groups determine the dominant and legitimized way of writing and talking about heritage – what Laurajane Smith refers to as Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) – which, in turn, has strong impact on heritage marketing and management practices, including designations, protection and funding.[66] AHD not only limits perceptions about legitimate heritage, but

"it also constrains the debate about social inclusion. Much of that debate is

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[61] *Ibid*., 7.
[62] Erica Lehrer and Cynthia Milton, "Introduction: Witnesses to Witnessing," in *Curating Difficult Knowledge* Palgrave MacMillan Memory Studies, ed. Erica Lehrer, Cynthia Milton, and Monica Patterson (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2011), 4.
[63] Macdonald points to the discrepancy in terms of the translation of the term 'heritage' in English, which in German usually refers to "*Denkmäler*." *Denkmäler*, however, does not accurately translate to heritage. More appropriate would be the German terms "*Erbe*," *Erbschaft*," oder "*Kulturerbe*" which highlights the aspect of inheritance in relation to the past. "Difficult heritage" then would be perhaps "*Schwierige Erbschaft*" or "*Schwieriges Kulturerbe*," which would refer to the uncomfortable aspects of this specific past.
[64] Tunbridge, John E. and Gregory Ashworth*, Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (Belhaven Press, 1996).
[65] Nick Carter and Simon Martin, "Dealing with difficult heritage: Italy and the material legacies of Fascism", *Modern Italy*, Vol. 24, Iss. 2 (2019): 117-122.
[66] Smith, *Uses of Heritage*.

> centred on how a concern about getting more people to come to authorized heritage, rather than considering if the heritage that we save and promote as heritage actually is representative of the diversity of historical and contemporary social and cultural experiences."[67]

This claim to authority provides professional experts with the power to select, interpret, and privilege specific elements, for instance, in science or cultural studies, and to significantly shape if not control public opinion on an organizational or societal level. Thus, AHD can be perceived as a practice of exclusion and the production of elite positions, which is confirmed and perpetuated through established institutions, such as museums.

iii. Material culture studies

Bjornar Olsen asks

> "[h]ow do things and objects 'mix' with human beings to form those configurations we call *society* and *history*? What role do things play in enabling and securing social life? If things make a difference, which they obviously do, are these differences grounded in qualities that go beyond their relational significance?"[68]

The study of the materiality spans a number of disciplines, including art, geography and anthropology. [69] Yet, as Olsen points out, this interest is oftentimes focused on the symbolic aspect of objects which represent the human lives behind the object, rather then on the inherent qualities which affect both our engagement with them, as well as our mutual existence. Things "are beings in the world alongside other beings such as humans, plants and animals" and suggests that "these beings share certain material properties, 'flesh', and membership in a dwelt-in world."[70] Due to their involvement in every aspect of our daily lives – what Tim Ingold refers to as "meshwork" - they are taken for granted.[71] Igor Kopytoff uses the concept of 'object biographies' to examine the social and material connections of an item as they change over time and within context, as opposed to ascribed meanings of objects.[72] Thus, everyday objects which may have had relatively little value at the time of their use are ascribed increase in symbolic and perhaps commercial value due to a specific event with which they are associated. On a similar note, a close link exists between the materiality of objects or landscapes and memory: Gustav Wollentz notes that "remembering and forgetting is not immaterial. On the contrary, memories are stimulated by visual clues."[73] Similarly, Maurice Halbwachs points to the connection

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[67] Smith, Laurajane, *Class, Heritage and the Negotiation of Place*, paper presented at "Missing Out on Heritage: Socio-Economic Status and Heritage Participation" conference, March 2009, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Laurajane-Smith/publication/299410856_Class_Heritage_and_the_Negotiation_of_Place/links/56f4e17508ae7c1fda2d7afc/Class-Heritage-and-the-Negotiation-of-Place.pdf Accessed August 20, 2020, 4.

[68] Bjørnar Olsen, *In Defense of Things*, (AltaMira Press, 2013), 2.

[69] See for example: Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in a Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Marc Augé, *Non-places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, (New York: Verso, 1992/1995); Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, (Hill and Wang, 1968); Tim Ingold, "Materials against materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues*, Vol. 14, Iss. 1 (2007): 1-16, 36-38; Igor Kopytoff, "*The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process*," in *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspectives*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64-91; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[70] Olsen, *In Defense of Things*, 9.

[71] Ingold, *Materials against materiality*.

[72] Kopytoff, *The cultural biography*.

[73] Gustav Wollentz, "Introduction", in *Landscapes of Difficult Heritage, Palgrave Studies in Cultural Heritage and Conflict* ed. Gustav Wollentz (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 1.

between collective memory and spatial frameworks.[74] Rather then being passive participants, objects and landscapes assert their agency through their interaction with humans through which they participate in meaning-making processes and the construction of a social world, thereby shaping experiences, memories and lives.[75] At the same time, the meaning of materiality is always plural as it will be interpreted differently by diverse people and contexts.

Sandra Dudley considers all movements of objects "as a series of displacements" as they can, similar to people, become displaced and exiled, for example, to a museum space.[76] The meaning of an object in the museal context is further established through spatial proximity and assemblage.[77] In the context of this dissertation, I am specifically interested in processes of meaning-making between materiality and persons in relation to the topography of the former forced labour camp Allach with its remaining material traces of the time of the camp's operation. Additionally, I explore how meaning and knowledge is produced through displacement; for example, many of the artefacts that were discovered during the archaeological excavation are everyday objects, which – under different circumstances – might have been thrown away. In the context of the history of the site, these mundane objects have assumed a new significance which is further enhanced through their placement in the memorial site Dachau.

Expanding the idea of the agency of objects, the precarious nature of dead bodies as both a person and an object invites us to consider the specific meaning ascribed to the skeletal human remains discovered during the archaeological excavations at the Allach site.[78] The dual perception of dead bodies as both subject/object and the specific meaning which was ascribed to these remains is highlighted through socio-cultural processes, including exhumation and reburial, the engagement of an Israeli rabbi to examine the skeletal remains, the arrangement of a multi-religious ceremony which was held at the reburial, and in their role as 'evidence' of the suffering of prisoners in the Allach camp.

iv. Death studies

While the overarching focus of my dissertation research concerns the re-emerging of the material and mnemonic history and continuities of the former subcamp complex Allach in a suburb of Munich, I place the recently discovered human remains at the very center of the layers of memories, interests, investments, powers and politics which surround the site.

Paradoxically, while the broad field of Holocaust studies includes the study of the processes of mass killings, comparatively little attention has been paid to the materialities of the dead, which constitute a significant aspect of the Holocaust – from the deportation of millions across the European continent to the development of 'efficient' killing methods to Operation 1005.[79] During the first years after the end of the Second World War, the mass graves at the

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[74] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*.
[75] Christopher Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments*, (Bloomsbury Academic, 1994).
[76] Sandra Dudley, *Things in Museums and Beyond: Loss, Liminality and Hopeful Encounters*, (Routledge, 2020).
[77] Caronia Letizia and Luigina Mortari, "The agency of things: how spaces and artefacts organize the moral order of an intensive care unit", *Social Semiotics*, Vol. 25, Iss. 4 (2015): 401-422.
[78] Stephen Edwards, "The body as object *versus* the body as subject: The case of disability," *Med Health Care Philos* Vol. 1 (1998): 47–56; Michael Gantley and James Carney, "Grave Matters: Mediating Corporeal Objects and Subjects through Mortuary Practices," *M/C Journal*, Vol. 19, Iss. 1 (2016).
[79] Andrej Angrick, "'*Aktion 1005', Spurenbeseitigung von NS-Massenverbrechen 1942–1945: eine 'geheime Reichssache' im Spannungsfeld von Kriegswende und Propaganda*", (Göttingen, Wallstein Verlag, 2018); see also Dreyfus, "Renationalizing bodies?"

former camps were subject to forensic examinations, which were in part related to searches and recovery missions.[80] The subsequent "historiographic silence" relating to the materialities of mass death may perhaps relate to "a certain disembodiment in the accounts of concentration camps, which tend to focus on the stories of survivors and to neglect the material aspects of the […] treatment of the dead."[81] The relatively recent 'forensic turn' in the humanities and social sciences with its increased focus on the material legacies of mass violence point toward a "real paradigm shift in remembrance," where "collective memories no longer rely exclusively on witness testimony but rather on material evidence."[82] Yet, while forensic exhumations "aim to re-establish human remains as individual, social and political beings and reinscribe them into familial, but also social and political communities."

This means that the same processes can also lead to the

> "often considerable tension between the state – whose role is commonly to institute the trajectories of human remains and decide on their fate (including inscription of collectivized identities) – and ownership claims put forward by the relatives of the dead."[83]

It is specifically in the context of commissioned and performed forensic investigations when the "corpocentrism of politics" emerges, as the management of the dead is directly related to "distinctive necropolitical regime[s]."[84] Indeed, the outcomes and findings of forensic investigations can be deployed to develop new representations and interpretations of the past, and stakeholders may have a vested interest in utilizing forensic outcomes to "strengthen and substantiate existing (dominant) narratives around the past."[85]

These recent theoretical frameworks which conceptualize the role of the dead in society – specifically in relation to histories of violence and mass death - as well as the potential instrumentalization of forensic findings provide an excellent starting point for my exploration of the role and perception of the human remains which were discovered in the area of the former forced labour camp Allach. Three considerations specifically inform my approach:

First, Katherine Verdery's seminal work *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies* and recent developments in death studies have challenged the conceptualization of corpses as simply material remains, and instead argue that dead bodies, although lacking intentionality, have a considerable posthumous political life and possess social, mnemonic and political agency.[86]

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[80] Dreyfus, "Renationalizing bodies?"
[81] *Ibid*., 131.
[82] Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction. Why Exhume?" 1-14, 6-7.
[83] Zuzanna Dziuban, *Mapping the 'Forensic Turn': Engagements with Materialities of Mass Death in Holocaust Studies and Beyond*, (new academic press, Vienna, 2017), 28.
[84] Francisco J. Ferrandiz and C. G. M. Antonius Robben, *Necropolitics: Mass Graves and Exhumations in the Age of Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).
[85] Dziuban, *Mapping the 'Forensic Turn*, 25.
[86] Mike Featherstone, "The body in consumer culture." in *The body: social process and cultural theory* eds. Featherstone, Mike, Hepworth, Mike and Turner, Bryan (Sage Publication: London, 1991), 170–196; Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey, *Death, memory and material culture* (Berg: Oxford, 2001); Elizabeth Hallam, Jenny Hockey and Glennys Howarth, *Beyond the body. Death and social identity* (Routledge: London, 1999); Jenny Hockey, Carol Komaromy and Kate Woodthorpe, *The matter of death. Space, place and materiality* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2010); Tiffany Jenkins, *Contesting human remains in museum collections: the crisis of cultural authority* (London: Routledge, 2010); Roma Sendyka, "Sites that Haunt: Affects and Non-sites of Memory." *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* XX, Iss. X (2016): 2 – 16; Roma Sendyka "Prism: Understanding Non-Sites of Memory." *EUtROPES: The Paradox of the European Empire* eds. Boyer, John and Berthold Molden (University of Chicago Center: Paris, 2015); Tim Sørensen, "The presence of the dead. Cemeteries, cremation and the staging of non-place," *Journal of Social Archaeology* Vol. 9 (2010): 110 - 135; Sarah Tarlow, "The aesthetic corpse in nineteenth century

Second, historian Jean-Marc Dreyfus has pointed specifically to the notable lack of scholarly interest in the study of the dead body in relation to mass violence and genocide, and suggests that an increased focus on the material sites of mass killings and grave sites will offer new and important insight, particularly for historical and cultural studies.[87] Indeed, a number of scholars, including Dreyfus, Élisabeth Anstett, Zuzanna Dziuban, and Roma Sendyka have placed the dead body and/or sites of mass violence and death at the centre of their analyses.[88]

Third, a unique relationship has been theorized to exist between the dead and the surrounding locale and landscape, which in turn impacts not only perceptions of specific locations and sites, but also informs which places are perceived as 'appropriate' for the dead in relation to the living.[89] For example, a dominant theory of death in Western society poses that death is sequestrated, that is, death, the corpse, and sites of the dead became increasingly separated from society.[90] While prior to the 18th century, cemeteries were located within communities, the relationship to the dead changed as corpses were perceived as sources of pollution and diseases, and cemeteries were moved to the outskirts of towns and villages. In addition to these perceptions of grave sites and the ambiguous role of the dead body by the living, the relationship between the corpse and the surrounding landscape exists also on a literal as well as on a metaphorical level: through the processes of decomposition, the dead have become part of the local soil. The individual memories of the victims cannot be remembered or retrieved, but their traces have merged with the location at which they were deposited in a material way; the dead have thus become part of the *genius loci*.[91] While their physical remains can be exhumed and removed from the site, the intimate contact between the local landscape and the dead cannot be eradicated. Yet, the retrieval

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Britain." in *Thinking through the body. Archaeologies of corporeality* eds. Hamilakis Yannis, Mark Pluciennik and Sarah Tarlow (Kluwer Academic: New York, 2002), 85-98; Howard Williams, "Death warmed up. The agency of bodies and bones in early Anglo-Saxon cremation rites," *Journal of Material Culture* Vol. 9 (2004): 263-91; Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

[87] Dreyfus, "Renationalizing Bodies?" 130.

[88] See for example: Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus (eds). *Human Remains and Violence: Methodological Approaches. Manchester* (Manchester University Press, 2017); ---. *Human Remains in Society. Curation and Exhibition in the Aftermath of Genocide and Mass-violence*, (Manchester University Press, 2016); ---. *Human Remains and Identification*: *Mass violence, genocide, and the 'forensic turn', (Manchester University press, 2015); ---. Destruction and Human Remains: Disposal and Concealment in Genocide and Mass Violence ((*Manchester University Press*, 2014);* Zuzanna Dziuban, *The "Spectral Turn": Jewish Ghosts in the Polish Post-Holocaust Imaginaire* (Transcript Verlag, 2020); ---. *Mapping the 'Forensic Turn': Engagements with Materialities of Mass Death in Holocaust Studies and Beyond* (Vienna: new academic press, 2017); ---. "(Re)politicising the dead in post-Holocaust Poland: the afterlives of human remains at the Bełżec extermination camp," in *Curation and Exhibition in the Aftermath of Genocide and Mass-violence*, ed. Élisabeth Anstett and Jean-Marc Dreyfus (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016) 38-65. ---. "The Politics of Human Remains at the Peripheries of the Holocaust." *Dapim: Studies of the Holocaust*, Special Issue: Last Stage of the Holocaust. Vol. 29, Iss. 3 (2015) 154-172; ---. "Polish Landscapes of Memory at the Sites of Extermination: The Politics of Framing," in *Space and the Memories of Violence*, ed. Estela Schindel and Pamela Colombo (Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2014); ---. "Framing Absence – Reframing Memory: Spatialities of Holocaust and World War II Memory in Contemporary Poland." *Naharaim*, Vol. 6, Iss. 1 (2012) 83-107; Zuanna Dziuban and Ewa Stańczyk. "Introduction: The Surviving Thing: Personal Objects in the Aftermath of Violence." *Journal of Material Culture*, Vol. 5, Iss. 4 (2020) 381-390; Sendyka, Roma. "Sites that Haunt"; ---. "Prism: Understanding Non-Sites of Memory."

[89] Spaces dedicated to the dead, death or dying are theorized as "necrogeographies" and "deathscapes; see for example: Sarah Semple and Stuart Brookes, "Necrogeography and necroscapes: living with the dead," *World Archaeology*, Vol. 52, Iss. 1 (2020): 1-15; James Sidaway and Avril Maddrell, *Deathscapes: Spaces for Death, Dying, Mourning, and Remembrance* (Routledge, 2010).

[90] Phillip Mellor and Chris Shilling, "Modernity, self-identity and the sequestration of death," *Sociology*, Vol. 27, Iss. 3 (1993): 411-431.

[91] Edward Casey, "Keeping the Past in Mind," *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 37, Iss. 1 (1983): 77-95; Casey notes: "Place in its landscape being imparts itself on me, permeates me. And, as the 'spirit of place', the genius loci, enters me, the visible becomes increasingly invisible," 88.

and reburial of these specific remains indicate the intent to separate the location from the inconvenient and unsettling reminder of a violent history and mass death.

Building and expanding on these conceptualization, I consider the human remains found at the site of the former forced labour camp Allach and related grave sites as a distinct form of difficult heritage – or "unsettled heritage."[92] Similar to the ability of difficult heritage (which has perhaps been repressed or forgotten) to disrupt and unsettle, the dead bodies resulting from histories of violence and genocide may "threaten[s] to break through into the present in disruptive ways, opening up social divisions,"[93] thereby calling into question existing historical narratives and interpretations when they re-emerge in contemporary contexts. Furthermore, I suggest that the dead bodies of the victims of the Holocaust carry specific connotations in the German context, which stems from the time of the liberation of the camps, during which Germans were forcibly confronted with the aftermath of the genocide.

v. Critical museum studies

Museums have traditionally been dedicated to communicating specific information to the public, as well as functioning as spaces of identity-formation.[94] In their role as educational institutions museums can be perceived as representational media in specific socio-cultural, spacio-temporal contexts: they serve as architectural icons for the transmission of particular histories (and/or heritage) as well as containers of memory; they play an important role in their function as spaces of symbolic representations of national narratives in the process of nation-shaping; they provide entertainment and information, produce knowledge and meaning, and serve as research and archival centers.[95] As cultural institutions, museums are perceived as highly trustworthy sources of objective information and are often "thought of as revealing the naked truth, as making visible some essential detail of the truth."[96] The function of the museum as an important cultural and educational institution makes it an ideal medium to transmit socio-cultural, political and historical ideas: for example, national museums dedicated to the history of the nation state contribute to the formation of national identity by creating an "imagined community" or a "community of memory", communicating specific values, meaning and memories, while they also ascribe meaning to specific historical events, individuals, objects, art, spaces and places.[97] The authority of the museum as a highly trustworthy source of information justifies the selection, display and presentation of specific narratives and objects, thereby creating and perpetuating specific meta-narratives about the past.

Critical museology emerged as a distinct discourse in contemporary museology. As museums are historically connected to colonialism, imperialism, and Eurocentrism, their

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[92] The Horizon 2020 project *Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Transnational Europe* (UNREST) proposes th definition of mass graves as "unsettling heritage." See: UNREST: Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Transnational Europe, http://www.unrest.eu/home/ Accessed August 20, 2018.
[93] Macdonald, "Unsettling memories."
[94] Andrew Newman, Fiona McLean, "The Impact of Museums upon Identity," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 12, Iss. 1 (2006): 49 – 68.
[95] Katrin Pieper, *Die Musealisierung des Holocaust. Das Jüdische Museum Berlin und das U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. Ein Vergleich* (Köln / Weimar / Wien: Böhlau, 2006); Zoë Sofia, "Container Technologies," *Hypatia* Vol. 15, Iss. 2 (2000): 181-201.
[96] Britain Thinks March 2013 *Public perceptions of – and attitudes to – the purposes of museums in society. A report prepared by Britain Thinks for Museums Association*, http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=954916 Accessed June 20, 2016; Sandra Dudley, *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Properties of Things* (Routledge London and New York, 2012), 189.
[97] Eric Gable, "How we Study History Museums: Or Cultural Studies at Monticello," in *New and Theory and Practice: an Introduction* ed. Janet Marstine (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 109-128, 110.

approaches to collections, displays and interpretations of the past were fundamentally based on these approaches, which in the present is still reflected, for example, in countless cultural objects and ancestral remains which were taken from their original socio-cultural contexts – often without the consent of the related community.[98] Critical museology developed as a framework, calling into question these imbalances of power and representation in the late 20th and early 21st century.[99] Critical museology can be understood as a method to democratize collections, exhibitions and interpretations; to challenge dominant historical, social or cultural narratives and practices; and is based on the framework of equity, inclusion, and postcolonialism, and seeks to develop participatory engagement of visitors and communities.[100] At the same time, critical museology highlights continuing forms of social injustice, such as colonialism, racism, exclusions and disenfranchisement in the museum as well as in the community.

The aspects which are of specific interest to me in the context of this dissertation concern the representation of difficult heritage in a museal context, motives and intentions for such displays, and the problematic aspects which emerge through these representations. Not dissimilar to discourses of difficult heritage, museums have assumed new practices that seek to "democratize the communication between museum and public," by, for example, incorporating the histories and narratives of previously silenced and marginalized communities. A key aspect of this approach is its focus on individual biographies in everyday settings.[101] Yet, as Silke Arnold-de-Simine cautions, "[w]hile the institution of the museum aims to reinvent and redeem itself, the rhetoric of good intentions veils the twin dangers of commodification on the one hand and political instrumentalization on the other."[102] Specifically privately-funded museums "need their customers to approve of the exhibition rather than feel challenged beyond their comfort zone."[103] On the other hand, state-funded museums "are expected to represent a broad social or at least political consensus, producing narratives that inform an integral part of national identity politics."[104]

Although on a global scale cultural institutions are representing more difficult histories – specifically relating to injustice, violence, loss, and death, such subjects come with specific challenges, for example, in the case of perpetrator photography. Roger Simon argues that the act of gazing at such images

> "might be considered exploitative since it can leave one feeling good about oneself, enjoying the fact that one is able 'to feel oneself feeling.' In such circumstances, there is a concern that the act of viewing photographic images of suffering and death will be

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[98] Anthony Shelton, "Critical Museology: A Manifesto," *Museum Worlds*, Vol. 1, Iss. 1 (2013) 7-23; Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams.*

[99] Jesús Pedro Lorente, "From the White Cube to a Critical Museography: The Development of Interrogative, Plural and Subjective Museum Discourses," in *From Museum Critique to the Critical Museum* ed Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski (Routledge, London, 2015); Ivan Karp and Corinne Kratz, "The Interrogative Museum," in *Museum as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges* ed. Raymond Silverman (Routledge, 2014).

[100] Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, (London: Routledge, 1995); Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams*; Steven Lavine*., Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum* Display (Washington DC: Smithsonian Press, 1991); *S*helton, "Critical Museology: A Manifesto."

[101] Arnold-de-Simine, Silke, *Mediating Memory in the Museum: Empathy, Trauma, Nostalgia* (Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies, 2013), 3.

[102] *Ibid*., 2.

[103] *Ibid*.

[104] *Ibid*.

> taken in itself as a sufficient act of witness, sufficient as an act of reparation and repair requiring no further thought and action."[105]

Although the intent behind the display of such difficult pasts might be educational, it is precisely the circumstances of the production of the photograph that make gazing at such images problematic: "we must acknowledge the possibility that an image of suffering might compound or add to suffering. Such an argument recognizes the violence that the act of photography itself enacts in such situations."[106] To gaze at images related to the Holocaust "might be considered exploitative since it can leave one feeling good about oneself, enjoying the fact that one is able 'to feel oneself feeling."[107] Simon argues that perpetrator photographs have the potential to create complacency in the viewer, who may consider the act of viewing such images as "sufficient as an act of reparation," and thereby become complicit in "the very conditions that have produced suffering in the first place."[108] While the inclusion of previously silenced voices or difficult heritage in a museal context may indicate a tangible step toward greater inclusion and a willingness to engage with past injustices, the display in itself does not resolve the inherent imbalance of power present in the creation of the image as well as in the processes of display and viewing.

vi. Curatorial Dreaming

Scholars and curators Shelley Butler and Erica Lehrer sought to bridge the divide between academic research and the public, including museums, through their methodology of "curatorial dreaming." Curatorial dreaming is an "innovative method of engaged analysis and critique", which proposes the narrative creation of imagined exhibitions to allow scholars to identify cultural and institutional problems and possibilities by "work outside our comfort zones, in a constructive rather than deconstructive mode"; it also offers "an opportunity to engage with wider audiences in new ways."[109] Curatorial dreaming as a methodology allows me as a scholar and researcher to engage with my field in different ways, and also challenges me to think creatively and constructively about the issues which I have identified over the course of my research. The imagined exhibit is informed by research and analysis, as functions as an "alternative mode of critical, intellectual practice – a form of 'theorizing in the concrete."[110] As a curatorial dream is not limited by the usual constrains of museums or other public spaces, including funding, it can take place in a range of sites and locations – such as an organization's headquarter - and can be informed by a wide range of theoretical concepts, including, identity

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[105] Roger I. Simon, "Exhibiting Archival Photographs of Racial Violence as a Pedagogy of Witness," in *A Pedagogy of Witnessing: Curatorial Practice and the Pursuit of Social Justice* ed. Roger I. Simon (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 40 and 27. Note: in her seminal works *Regarding the Pain of Others* and *On Photography*, Susan Sontag contemplates the ambivalent meaning and impact of photography, specifically atrocity photography, recalling her own response to photographs of the Holocaust. Sontag acknowledges that photographs have the capacity of making events more real than if they had never been seen as photographs, but at the same time, "after repeated exposure to images it also becomes less real." Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York, A Delta Book, 1977), 20. See also: Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

[106] Simon, "Exhibiting Archival Photographs," 25.

[107] *Ibid*., 27.

[108] *Ibid.* Note: On the same note, photographs which were taken for propaganda purposes during the Third Reich, such as for example photographs taken in the BMW production plant, which do not depict atrocities, but rather seemingly well-nourished, groomed and clothed concentration camp prisoners (indicated through their striped prisoner uniform) working on a bench in a workshop, may be perceived as reassuring that the treatment of the prisoners "was not so bad," therefore also encouraging feelings of complacency.

[109] Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams*, 19.

[110] *Ibid.,* 5.

formation, critical race theory, cultural memory, reflexivity, and the conciliatory potential of heritage, among others.[111] As a significant aspect of my research is to engage with and examine unequal distribution of power, and I deliberately employ methodologies to dismantle my own position of power (see more in the following subsection), the development of a curatorial dream allows me to upturn specific power structures. For example, instead of limiting information on the forced labour camp Allach to spaces such as the BMW museum or the Dachau memorial site, my curatorial dream will represent this difficult heritage in the civic public space where citizens encounter it as they go about their daily lives. Furthermore, by placing this difficult heritage *outside* of spaces which are commonly thought as 'appropriate' for representations of the Holocaust and the Third Reich, such as memorial sites and museums, where it is ultimately "out of sight, out of mind," I seek to reconnect this history with the broader fabric of society, whereby I hope to invite the public to engage with this heritage so that it can become and remain visible. As my curatorial dream will aim to make visible the many unknown victims who perished at the site, I specifically hope to employ this methodology as a reconciliatory approach by inviting the public to consider how the absence and presence of these unidentified individuals' functions in contemporary society. Finally, with my curatorial dream, I also seek to engage the German general public with this legacy of the nation, as citizens with familial connections to the Nazi era inevitably are also connected to this difficult heritage.

vii. Autoethnography and surrendering the objective researcher position

The aspect of power and the subjugation of specific voices shaped and informed the difficult heritage of the Allach site from its very beginning. The abuses range from the economic exploitation – and extermination - of forced labourers and "less-than-slaves"[112] by Nazi Germany and the corporation BMW during the Third Reich, to the housing of refugees and displaced persons on the periphery of the city after the end of the Second World War, to the continued practices of exclusion in the contemporary Ludwigsfeld. In all instances marginalized individuals are pitted against politically and economically powerful parties. As a result, the concerns, histories, and memories of the marginalized communities are only considered insofar as they conform with, further, or hinder the agendas of the stakeholders.

As an academic researcher, working within the context of an established institution, I am also implicated in the creation of narratives, and the format in which I chose to contribute to the narratives was therefore a significant concern. The format of my narrative in relation to my research on the memories and histories of the former Allach camp site was an important aspect in calling into question the scientific approach of the objective researcher, while at the same time, enabling me to generate and contribute to knowledge by shifting the point of view in history-writing from a top-down approach to a bottom-up perspective: traditionally, historical narratives tended to focus on leaders, structures or historical facts and events, and were produced by what was assumed to be impartial and objective academic researchers, who usually belonged to the social and political elite (top-down history). In the 1930s, interest in the experiences of the ordinary person and their lived experiences began to emerge, which is reflected, for example, in the publications Black Jacobins and Black Reconstruction, which represented the experiences of

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[111] *Ibid*.
[112] See chapter 3 for more information.

former slaves and workers.[113] By the 1960s, a new generation of historians began to explore, for example, the history of the working class, post-slavery African Americans, women's history, or peasant life (bottom-up history).[114] This approach did not only make visible and gave equal significance to the experiences of ordinary people, but also served to call into question the notion of a distanced and impartial researcher.

Researchers are, by implication, members of specific socio-cultural categories – for example, gender, age, ethnicity, etc. – and have lived experiences, assumptions, beliefs, and biases which may inform their approach, data collection and interpretation. As such, researchers can be understood to be 'implicated' in that their own situatedness will inevitably impact and inform their research.

Michael Rothberg has developed the concept of the "implicated subject" to examine the complexity of complicity rather than a polar victim-and-perpetrator relationship.[115] Rothberg focuses on

> "convergences – as well as contradictions – between different dilemmas: namely, the entanglement of the diachronic and synchronic, the impure positioning that renders subjects fundamentally complex, and the way in which different forms of power interact and build on each other."[116]

The concept of "implicated subject" draws our attention to a wider range of ways we are folded into, inherit, or benefit from the legacies of violence and injustice, "shift[ing] questions of accountability from a discourse of guilt to a less legally and emotionally charged terrain of historical and political responsibility."[117] Rothberg's concept of the 'implicated subject' resonated deeply with me, as it raises questions about my own role as an individual, as an academic researcher and author.

In anthropological and historical writing, autoethnographic technique has emerged as a method through which the researcher engages deliberately and reflectively with the complications of one's role in the creation of narratives. In anthropology, autoethnographic writing has given rise to important considerations, specifically around what it means to be an insider in a culture. Ruth Behar insists that "[p]ersonal evidence is evidence" and points to the potential of autoethnographic research and writing to "democratize" the academy, to challenge "privileged academic discourses," and to "counter colonizing voices" while also presenting an alternative perspective.[118] Behar argues that

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[113] C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963).
[114] Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977); David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles (*New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); ---. *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market during the Nineteenth Century (*New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and the Society of the Slave South* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1989).
[115] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*.
[116] *Ibid*., 17.
[117] *Ibid*., 20.
[118] A. P. DeLeon, "How do I begin to tell a story that has not been told? Anarchism, autoethnography, and the middle ground," *Equity & Excellence in Education*, Vol. 43, Iss. 4 (2010): 398–413, p. 408; Sherick Hughes and Julie L. Pennington, *Autoethnography: Process, Product, and Possibility for Critical Social Research* (Sage Publications, 2017), 8. Ruth Behar, "Bringing the Personal into Scholarship," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 29, 1994, https://www.chronicle.com/article/bringing-the-personal-into-scholarship/ Accessed August 1, 2021.

> "to abandon the alienating 'metalanguage' […] to be able to say "I" in scholarly writing also stems from a wish to speak in plain language that will be understood by a large audience, to say something that resonates more than jargon-laden analyses do with readers."[119]

As an academic researcher, my perspective can serve to either support or call into question established narratives and power structures. As a scholar in the fields of cultural anthropology and history, as well as a non-Jewish, German-descent first generation Canadian settler, I am deeply conscious of my own subjectivity and participation in a settler-colonial society. Thus, to position myself in the context of my research and to reflect both on my experiences as a researcher as well as my own situatedness is paramount. By using elements of autoethnography, I am intentionally situating myself and become a participant in the field of study. As I do not seek to establish and maintain an 'objective,' omnipotent perspective, I am able to explore the contemporary events of the Ludwigsfeld as I encountered them, and thereby to offer an alternative perspective to established and traditional academic discourses, as well as to illuminate gaps in particular domains.[120] With the exception of Libuše Vepřek's thoughtful ethnographic study of the contemporary Ludwigsfeld, all other publications on the former subcamp complex Allach have assumed the traditional historical, seemingly objective perspective of the disinterested researcher.[121]

I approach this project from the subject position of both an historically implicated participant (a non-Jewish, German-born and Munich-raised third generation descendant of paternal Nazi supporters) and an empathetic observer (a Canadian ethnographer and a Holocaust scholar). In my role as a German 'insider' participant, I am deeply and intrinsically familiar with the socio-cultural climate and context of the site. Being born and raised in post-war West Germany while regularly visiting extended family in East Germany, I took the division of Germany for granted without understanding or considering the wider historical and political context. The pedagogical approach to the Nazi past in school was fact-based and sought to facilitate identification with the victims through shock and guilt without providing opportunities for students to explore their own family's role during the Third Reich, nor to understand the impact of the past in the present. My exposure to this specific pedagogical and familial approach to dealing with the past deeply shaped my perspective of the Third Reich and post-war Germany.[122] At the same time, a Canadian 'outsider', I am aware of my own role as a European settler in a post-colonial society with its own ongoing history of exclusion, discrimination and social injustice. My dual position as a

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[119] Behar, "Bringing the Personal into Scholarship."
[120] Hughes and Pennington, *Autoethnography*, 13.
[121] Vepřek, Libuše, "Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten eines Münchner Viertels. Vom Kampf um Anerkennung und Deutungshoheit über einen städtischen Raum," in *Münchner ethnographische Schriften. Kulturwissenschaftlich-ethnologische Untersuchungen zu Alltagsgeschichte, Alltagskultur und Alltagswelten in Europa*, Vol. 30 (München: Herbert Utz, 2019); for other publications on forced labour at BMW and the former forced labour camp Allach see for example: Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945. Geschichte und Bedeutung* (Munich, 1994); Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*; Andreas Heusler, "Auslaendereinsatz: Zwangsarbeit fuer die Muenchner Kriegswirtschaft 1939 – 1945" *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Muenchen* (1996); Horst Moennich, *BMW Eine deutsche Geschichte* (Wien/Darmstadt, 1989); Sabine Schalm, "Ueberleben durch Arbeit: Aussenkommandos und Aussenlager des KZ Dachau 1933 – 1945," in *Geschichte der Konzentrationslager 1933-1945*, Band 10 (Metropol, 2009); Constanze Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW,* im Auftrag von MTU Aero Engines und BMW Group (Oldenburg Verlag, Muenchen, 2006); Zofka Zedenek, "Allach – Sklaven für BMW. Zur Geschichte eines Außenlagers des KZ Dachau," *Dachauer Hefte*, Vol. 2 (1986): 68-78.
[122] Sabine Reichel, *What did you do in the War, Daddy? Growing Up German* (Hill and Wang, New York, 1989), 110 – 139 and 133 – 140.

participant as well as an observer in German as well as Canadian contexts brought to my awareness my own position in relation to the respective groups of victims, which I found reflected in Sabine Reichel's experience of learning about the Holocaust in post-war Germany:

> "[w]e were showered with numbers and dates. A few million dead bodies are impossible to relate to; raw numbers don't evoke emotions […] We were all sent home without further explanation; I didn't discuss what we'd seen with my classmates, nor did I mention it to my parents […] the grown-ups always gave us the impression that it had just happened. All by itself!"

Reichel further notes that "Jews were introduced to me dead: as enormous piles of skin and bones, twisted limbs and distorted faces, waiting to be tossed into carts bound for the crematorium […] The lingering question 'Why the Jews?' never came up in school or anywhere else."[123] I did not have any direct interactions with Jewish people in Germany until I visited Israel, and eventually in the context of my studies of the Holocaust in an academic setting - mainly in the US and Canada. Aside from the Holocaust, I knew nothing about Jewish heritage, as it did not feature in my own social circle or in high school, and Jewish spaces did not exist in the everyday-fabric of my live – and Germany on a larger scale - in contrast to Christian churches, symbols, holidays and customs. Thus, the long and rich diverse heritage and contributions of German Jews where completely extinguished by the all-encompassing shadow of the Holocaust which reduced Jews to an inhuman shape of 'otherness,' to which I related through a confused sense of guilt and empathy toward an abstract faceless and historic collective. Reichel notes that after the Second World War, Germany "was indeed *Judenrein*" (free of Jews), both materially and spiritually.[124] The traces which remained, particularly in the context of the Holocaust, obscured and eliminated not only the lives of individuals but also of the role of the Jewish community in German history.[125] My experience – or lack of – was not unique and is reflective of post-war West German urban development and socio-cultural climate: as Michael Meng highlights, traces of the Jewish past were eradicated as Germans rebuilt their destroyed homes and cities and made deliberate choices about what was culturally valuable.[126] By focusing on the future and a sparkling new urban landscape,

> "the Jewish 'other' fell outside dominant, narrow definitions of historical and cultural value. As they rebuilt their cities after the war, city officials, urban planners, and historic preservationists demolished and neglected sites of […] difference."[127]

Since the 1980s, and increasingly after Germany's reunification, a dramatic change in national and international interest in Jewish spaces and places has occurred, and although this may have initiated in some circles a more in-depth engagement with Germany's Jewish past, generally "Germans […] embrace Jewish sites as self-congratulatory symbols of an already secure democratic tolerance and pluralism."[128]

Not surprisingly, my interactions with Jewish people were and are at times determined by my German ancestry, and in an odd role-reversal, I have at times found myself being deeply self-conscious of my heritage: for instance, individuals have assumed that I am of Jewish descent

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[123] *Ibid*., 110 – 139 and 133 – 140.
[124] *Ibid*., 134.
[125] *Ibid*, 136.
[126] Michael Meng *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Ruins in Postwar Germany and Poland* (Harvard University Press. 2011), 5.
[127] *Ibid*, 152.
[128] *Ibid*., 10.

myself, due to my interest in the Holocaust as well as my name. In one situation specifically, I listened to a particularly passionate exchange about the responsibility to continue to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust, which, it was posited, would and could only be understood by a person of Jewish decent. In this specific intimate group setting, I felt deeply conflicted in that my implied Jewishness had allowed me to be included in this conversation, yet I could not bring myself to admit to my non-Jewishness and Germanness, out of fear of offending those present by not having revealed my identity sooner. Yet, I wondered, should I be more upfront about my birth heritage, even though it is largely irrelevant in other aspects of my life? At the same time, experiences such as these cause me to not only be self-consciously aware of my own undeniable heritage, but also to question my ability to study the Holocaust as a non-Jewish person of German perpetrator descent.

While vastly different in numerous aspects, arguably, notable similarities exist in Germany's struggle to come to terms with its Nazi past, and Canada's slow acknowledgement not only of the lasting and devastating impact of colonialism on Indigenous communities in the present, but also in recognizing the need to make more significant efforts to include Indigenous histories and lives into all aspects of Canadian culture and society. In response to the publication of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015,[129] the political climate in Canada is very gradually shifting as efforts are being made to seek to repair the relationship between the Canadian nation and the Indigenous peoples. However, the appropriation of Indigenous territories and resources, the imposition of a foreign governance system – which includes the establishment of reserves – the residential school system, in addition to deeply rooted anti-Indigenous perceptions and the intergenerational impacts of colonialization will continue to affect the emotional, spiritual, physical and economic wellbeing of Indigenous individuals and communities on a daily basis and cannot be corrected with select political gestures.

As a European immigrant to and settler in Canada, I inevitably contribute to and perpetuate the lasting impact of colonialism, not only through my presence in society and on the land, but also because I rarely have direct engagement with its Indigenous peoples, with the exception of very few encounters in classroom settings as a university student: the social, economic and physical structures of my middle-class life do not naturally provide opportunities to meet and engage with Indigenous communities. Yet, as a Canadian, I have a considerably higher degree of exposure to non-European cultural and ethnic diversity than I did in Germany, which has contributed to my awareness of the legacies of colonialism and perceptions of socio-cultural expectations and norms.[130] This is to some extent the result of Canada's official multicultural policy, which holds that Canada does not have an official culture and a vision which holds that "all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging."[131] Yet, multiculturalism continues to be subject of considerable controversy, and policy does not necessarily translate into tolerance and diversity on a societal level: anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black

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[129] For more information, see website Truth and Reconciliation Commission Canada, http://www.trc.ca/about-us/our-mandate.html Accessed August 12, 2020.
[130] Janet Jacobs, Memorializing the Holocaust: Gender, Genocide and Collective Memory (I.B. Tauris, 2010), 6.
[131] "Multiculturalism," Government of Canada website, https://www.canada.ca/en/services/culture/canadian-identity-society/multiculturalism.html Accessed September 5, 2020.

racism, anti-immigrant, antisemitism, anti-Asian racism, xenophobia and homophobia attitudes remain prevalent and persistent.[132]

When I approached my research of the former forced labour camp Allach, I wanted to engage with some of the experiences I had during my own early encounters with the Holocaust, namely the seeming disconnect between the unimaginable horrors of this historical event, represented in the memorial sites, and the continuity of normal life for ordinary people, which occurs outside of the memorial sites. While important work and knowledge is created in the academia, oftentimes this knowledge does not reach the realm of the civic public, as academic publications tend to be written in what Behar calls "alienating 'metalanguage'" and are rarely consumed by non-academically trained readers.[133] I deliberately chose autoethnography as a methodological approach to make my work more accessible to non-academic readers, and thereby to challenge "colonizing voices," including my own voice as an academic researcher and writer.[134]

4. Outline of chapters

At first sight, the war-time and post-war history of the former forced labour camp Allach could be approached from a strictly historical perspective: after all, most of the camp had been dismantled, very few material traces had remained, and much historical information remains to be collected to fill the at times substantial gaps relating to this site. However, my dissertation illustrates that the trajectories and discourses which connect the past with the present materially and mnemonically is actually considerably more complex and at times contradictory.

The first chapter situates the remerging history and material culture of the former forced labour camp in the broader commemorative and educational discourses which developed in the German context since the end of the Second World War, with a specific focus on the emergence of the professionalization of the *Gedenkstaetten* as well as the slow and gradual engagement of German corporations with their difficult heritage of forced labour.

In the second chapter, I engage directly with the site and interested stakeholders in the present. This chapter illustrates the how the history of the site has received increasingly public attention, largely through the activist work of Klaus Mai and local residents. At the same time, through my personal encounters with the diverse stakeholders which have an interest in the site, I highlight the vastly different perspectives of residents, heritage professionals, the city of Munich and investors.

The third chapter provides an overview of the war-time history of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach, including the evolution of the actual camp, the expansion of the BMW plant, and the increasingly diverse worker population.

In the fourth chapter, I follow the dynamic changes of the site from the time of the liberation of the camp to the present with a focus on material and mnemonic continuities. By using post-colonial theories, I contextualize the unique character of this small community, whose

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[132] See for example: Shanifa Nasser, "Racism still 'very much alive' in Canada as stereotypes around coronavirus spread," *CNN*, February 1, 2020, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/racism-coronavirus-canada-1.5449023 Accessed February 1, 2020; Craig Lord, "Ottawa anti-racism march faces backlash amid shifting plans," *Global News,* June 5, 2020, https://globalnews.ca/news/7022811/ottawa-anti-racism-march-questions-george-floyd/ Accessed June 10, 2020.
[133] Behar, "Bringing the Personal into Scholarship."
[134] DeLeon, "How do I begin to tell a story that has not been told," 408; Hughes and Pennington, *Autoethnograph*, 8; Behar, "Bringing the Personal into Scholarship."

isolated character has remained remarkably unchanged since its function as a forced labour camp. Together, these first four chapters serve to create the context within which I will discuss the specific aspects relating to the site and its history in the subsequent chapters. By linking the past with the present and situating the site within the broader context of local, national and global memory discourses, the material and mnemonic aspects of the site emerge as complex multi-dimensional network, crossing not only temporal but also spatial boundaries.

A specific focal point of my research is on the discovery of the 12 human skeletal remains, which were discovered during an archaeological excavation in 2017 in the area of the former "Jewish camp" (chapter 5). I consider the surviving traces of these victims as a crucial aspect in the contemporary struggle over the interpretation and representation of the site, in that they provide a particularly vivid impression of the suffering of the prisoners at the site, while, at the same time, they also raise disturbing questions relating to the identity, perception and treatment of the dead at this location. My research indicates that specific concerns existed around the potential (Jewish) identity of the victims, which would likely have had considerable implications for the future usage of the site. Through strategic and deliberate processes, any potential animosity relating to the treatment of the dead (their exhumation and reburial) as deliberately extinguished, so that the identity of the dead would not interfere with the capital interests of the developers and the city of Munich. At the same time, through the transfer and reburial of the skeletons in a dedicated area of a local cemetery, these 'out of place' remains have been placed in a socially and ideologically acceptable site.

As German corporations saw themselves increasingly confronted with their difficult heritage of forced labour, these companies eventually surrendered their considerable resistance, and instead began to address the topic proactively through public statements and the inclusion of this theme into their respective corporate museum spaces. Alongside with other German corporations, the company BMW included the topic for the first time in its extensively revised permanent exhibition, which opened in 2008. However, visitors had to actively seek out this information in 2 separate areas, which was effectively 'hidden' in touch-screen monitors and a catalogue. In addition, the information provided was potentially misleading. In response to the archeological excavations in the area of the former camp in 2016 and 2017 and the subsequent feasibility study, the BMW Group created a more substantial dedicated special exhibit in its permanent exhibition. While this new display addresses the site of the former forced labour camp Allach, it does not focus exclusively on this site, but also includes BMW's other forced labour sites. The new display utilizes strategies commonly used in museal displays on the Holocaust, such as survivor testimony recordings, and portrait photographs. Overall, this exhibition is framed explicitly around issues such as responsibility and reconciliation. However, as most of the material used in the display stems from the BMW archive – including staged perpetrator photographs, which provide a misleading representation of the realities of the working and living conditions of many forced labourers and prisoners (chapters six and seven, respectively).

Not surprisingly, the memorial site Dachau also developed a new special exhibit in its permanent exhibition space on the former forced labour camp Allach (chapter eight). This display is situated in a dedicated room and includes 100 of the over 1,000 artefacts which were discovered during the archaeological excavation. In addition, a display of a drawing of the skeletal remains in situ along with a brief description of the individual, such as their age, sex and their injuries, speak directly to the findings of the human remains. A small handful of personal items were discovered with some of the skeletons, such as small buttons, which are displayed as well. Together, this modest display speaks, arguably, more powerfully to the complete

obliteration of these individuals' lives, identities, and histories. I consider this display specifically poignant, as – in my interpretation – it is at the core of the exhibition. Yet, it does not seek to shock visitors but rather invites them to contemplate the absence of any further information about these individuals' lives. At the same time, as a result of the 'forensic turn' in the social sciences and humanities, human remains have assumed a new significance and this display may be considered as a manifestation of this new approach.

The ninth chapter of my dissertation will be a "curatorial dream." Through this framework, I develop an imaginary intervention through which I seek to address many of the limitations, challenges and short-comings which I have identified in my research. This approach allows me to make visible the power imbalances between the corporation and individual forced labourers, to reintroduce this history into the public realm rather than containing it a museal space, to invite the public to consider the extremely limited and at times complete absence of any information about these individuals' lives and suffering. My intent with this imaginary intervention is to offer a constructive and collaborative engagement with the public as well as the stakeholders toward reconciliation.

CHAPTER 1. Difficult heritage of the Third Reich as political, economic, and socio-cultural assets.

(Fieldnotes, Montreal, August 2018) In 1997 I began to wonder if two Holocaust memories existed in contemporary Germany. I grew up in West Germany, while my extended family was in East Germany, and as we only visited them sporadically, I did not develop strong emotional attachments. My family did not talk about the war. The only snippet of information I had was that my maternal grandfather had fought on the Eastern front and in Stalingrad and was in Russian captivity until 1947, and that my paternal grandfather, due to a health condition, did not serve directly at the front and was stationed closer to home, where he was somehow involved with delivering supplies. The impression I gathered as an uninformed child and youth was mainly that my grandparents had suffered from deprivations, just as other German families, but that overall they had been quite harmless, hardworking, ordinary citizens (just as – it would strike me much later – Christopher Brown's "ordinary men").[135] *I am sure that the fact that my parents lived in West Germany and the entire rest of the family in East Germany contributed to the familial silence which surrounded the topic, given the political tensions of the Cold War and perhaps a degree of animosity between the family members who had remained, and those who had left. Between the fragmented information which I learned about the Holocaust, and the absence of any information relating to these events from the very people who actually lived through the time, I was unable to draw a connection between the broader history and my own family; rather, the fragments created the impression that the horrors of the Holocaust were something that was carried out by a small group of evil Nazi leaders far away from the awareness and eyes of the German public, who were deliberately kept in the dark and bore no responsibility.*

In 1997, my paternal grandmother stayed with me after the death of my grandfather. At this time, I lived near Nuremberg with my own family, and one day I drove into the city with my grandmother in the passenger seat. It was a winter day with much snow and slush on the roads, and my attention was on the roads as well as on the babbel of my two young sons in their babyseats. As we passed the former Nazi party rally ground, my grandmother suddenly burst out: "I was here in 1938, I saw the Fuehrer." The joyful tone of her voice, her excitement, along with the incongruent piece of historical information took me completely by surprise, and rather than seeking to engage with her and learn more about her past, I only muttered "wonderful" and focused on driving. In retrospective, I regret that I did not engage more with my grandmother's memories of a time of her life which was clearly important to her, thereby learning more about my own family's history as well as about the experiences of ordinary Germans at that time. This experience took me completely by surprise: not only had I (naively) assumed that my own family had somehow indeed been so uninformed (or uninterested?) that except for my grandfathers' army service the Third Reich had passed them by, but I knew nothing about my grandmother's enthusiasm for Adolf Hitler. While I did not feel strongly attached to my grandparents, hearing my own grandmother burst into such enthusiastic language about the Fuehrer nevertheless came as a bit of a shock to me, specifically given my long-standing interest in

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[135] Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (HarperCollins, New York, 1992).

the Holocaust.

My grandmother clearly did not catch the sarcastic undertone of my voice; rather, she continued to talk about seeing the Fuehrer for the rest of the journey, and – as the Nazi rally ground had apparently triggered her memory – later on she offered another piece of unsettling information: that I was not a true member of the Gerber family because my hair and eyes were dark. I might have been able to justify my grandmother's fond memories of the Nazi era by putting it down to the national infatuation with Hitler or to nostalgic memories of an exciting era of her life. Yet, this statement made it rather clear to me that my grandmother's enthusiasm for the Nazis included the racial ideologies of the Third Reich; in spite of the decades which had since past, she had held on to their doctrine and without hesitation applied Nazi racial categories to me, her own granddaughter.

The next unexpected discovery came when, a few years later, I examined a portrait photograph of my paternal grandfather as a young man closely, and in the light of a desk lamp noticed that an area on the lapel of his jacket had been penciled out. I removed the smudge with an eraser, but only a round white mark appeared. The image was too blurry to show details. Yet, there was obviously a reason why this pin had been covered up. A few more years later, a remote uncle who was my paternal grandfather's step-brother kindly shared his war memories with me, and through his letters, I learned that both my paternal grandparents were avid Nazi supporters. Previously, before I knew about my grandparents' Nazi affiliation, I firmly and rightously imagined myself siding with the victims; now, I felt suddenly implicated by proxy: how did my grandparents' Nazi ideologies trickle down in my own family? How did they inform my father's personality and in turn my own? How could I possibly connect with the very people who had been persecuted and suffered by indivdiuals who shared my grandparents' ideologies? What did it mean that after all these years, my grandmother still had such fond memories of the Nazi era, which, clearly, overrode any 'political correctness' she may have developed in the meantime? If my own grandmother still subscribed to the ideology of the Nazi era – perhaps even glorified them – did other Germans have similar beliefs?

While these discoveries increased my personal interest in the cross-generational impact of the Third Reich on, for example, parenting practices, I was unsure what to do with this knowledge. I received very little interest from my family regarding this information, and my research in German archives on more specific information relating to my grandfathers proved meager results. It was not until I began my research on the former forced labour camp Allach, that I began to reflect more intently on how my own upbringing in West Germany, my familial context, and my findings were to direct and inform my research, interpretations and focus.[136]

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[136] The 'straw that broke the camel's back,' so to say, or more specifically, what finally caused me to consider the relationship between my father and his parents was a comment my grandmother made about the fact that my youngest child, an infant of 4 months at this point, was still in diapers. Initially, I was mainly struck with the absurdity of the assumption that a 4-month old infant could – or rather should – be potty-trained, the obvious absence of any understanding of child development, and the implied criticism on my ability to parent. It was only in retrospective, that I began to understand the hostile absence of warmth and empathy toward a very small child which was expressed through these sentiments, and it was not until a few years later that I began to read about the transgenerational impact of parenting methods during the Nazi era, which continue to affect contemporary Germans. For more information see: Alejandro Jenik and Estela Grad, "Prohibition of the attachment bond in the

In this chapter I situate a specific socio-cultural phenomenon – the emergence of the representation of forced labour in the museal spaces of German corporations that exploited workers and prisoners during the Third Reich since the late 1990s/early 2000s – in the wider context of German national discourses of Holocaust memory. I argue that while the acknowledgement of past wrong-doings has become a positively regarded, prevalent, and international practice – even an asset - in certain settings the representation of difficult heritage presents particular challenges that may neutralize the ethical work that difficult heritage is intended to spur a society to do.

The corporate context of companies whose contemporary wealth and power is directly related to the exploitation and inhumane treatment of forced labourers makes its space (physical and social) not neutral. Thus, the approaches of German corporations who participated in the exploitation of forced labourers to the long-silenced topic of forced labor deserves special attention: not only does their treatment of difficult heritage correlate with the "nationalization of [a Holocaust] memory" in Germany,[137] it raises further, corporate context-specific questions about the deliberate employment of difficult heritage out of economic, social and political self-interest. This dissertation inquires into the consequences and implications when difficult histories are told by the by-proxy-descendants of corporate and economic perpetrators who prospered as a result of the company's unacknowledged wrong-doing, and who have considerable monetary interests and brand reputations are at stake. What, in other words, does it mean to acknowledge past wrong-doings when such a move is regarded as a "positive development for contemporary identity"?[138]

In broader terms, I propose that a precarious turning point is occurring in Germany's much-lauded Holocaust education and commemoration, during which established global, national, regional and local Holocaust memory discourses – and the implied call for 'never again' - are being challenged, which raises questions relating to the ideas of 'universal lessons' which might be learned by anybody.[139] While the aim of Holocaust education may not be to eradicate anti-

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Third Reich," *Archivos Argentos de Pediatria*, Vol. 119, Iss. 4 (2021): 220 – 221; Sigrid Chamberlain, *Adolf Hitler, die deutsche Mutter und ihr erstes Kind* (Psychosozial Verlag, 2010); Anne Kratzer, "Harsh parenting guidelines may still affect German children of today," *Scientific American*, January 4, 2019, Online https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/harsh-nazi-parenting-guidelines-may-still-affect-german-children-of-today1/ Accessed October 1, 2020; Helm Stierlin, "The Parent's Nazi Past and the Dialogue Between the Generations," *Family Process*, Vol. 20, Iss. 4 (1981): 379-390; Juergen Mueller-Hohagen, *Verleugnet, verdraengt, verschwiegen. Seelische Nachwirkungen der NS-Zeit und Wege zu ihrer Ueberwindung* (Koesel Verlag, 2005). Dr. Mueller-Hohagen, a psychotherapist, notes that while it has often been stated that the silence in the families of Holocaust survivors was similar to the silence in perpetrator families, this assumption is fraught. While for the survivors, it was silence surrounding the unspeakable, while for the perpetrators, it was a silencing of what they had done in the past, advocated for, tolerated, and patiently listened to the collective of the persecutor. In summary, Mueller-Hohagen's suggests that "the Nazis are us, even after generations. Boys and girls, who have behavioural challenges in kindergarten, may have them as an indirect result of an entanglement of the grandparents in the injustices of the Nazi era." [my translation] See Georg Gruber, "Spaetfolgen der Nazi-Zeit," *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, August 11, 2005, Online https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/spaetfolgen-der-nazi-zeit.950.de.html?dram:article_id=133183 Accessed October 1, 2020.

[137] Cornelia Geissler, *Individuum und Masse: Zur Vermittlung des Holocaust in deutschen Gedenkstaettenaustellungen* (Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2015), 17.

[138] Macdonald, Unsettling Memories, 1.

[139] "The lesson of the Holocaust: a universal message," UNESCO media service,, January 24, 2012, http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view-tv-release/news/the_lesson_of_the_holocaust_a_universal_message/ Accessed August 3, 2021; Andrea Pető, "A paradigm change in Holocaust memorialization: lessons to be learned," (Open Access Repository, 2020) Online https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/71902/ssoar-2020-peto-A_paradigm_change_in_Holocaust.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y&lnkname=ssoar-2020-peto-A_paradigm_change_in_Holocaust.pdf Accessed February 15, 2021.

Semitism and perhaps all forms of racism, but rather to "inoculate the generality of the population against racist and anti-Semitic propaganda, and thereby restrict its appeal to a disaffected and politically insignificant rump,"[140] it is unclear, how such longitudinal changes in citizens' attitudes might be measured empirically. A small survey conducted amongst Scottish students indicated some of the potential pitfalls which may occur in the context of Holocaust education (which may, in turn, affect the 'lessons learned'); for example, the researchers noted that teachers did not necessarily use the term 'anti-Semitism' when teaching the Holocaust, which may lead to students potentially not perceiving anti-Semitism as relevant to contemporary society, or whether studying the Holocaust has a measurable impact on hostile attitudes toward other groups.[141]

In the case of Germany, in relation to national efforts to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust, this knowledge has not necessarily translated into more inclusive or tolerant attitudes – or an understanding of the historical facts - among the general public: a 2018 poll found that 41% of German high school students claim not to know that Auschwitz was a German death camp, and 41% of Jews in Germany reported that they were victims of anti-semitic hostility. In Germany's federal election in 2017, the extreme far right-wing party *Alternative fuer Deutschland* (AfD) [Alternative for Germany] entered the *Bundestag*, with 94 seats – thereby marking the first time that a right-wing party gained seats in the German parliament.[142] In May 2021, the Human Rights Watch announced that Europe was experiencing a "worrying surge of Antisemitism," including verbal or physical attacks, desecrations of synagogues and cemeteries, and, according to a survey of the European Commission, nine out of ten European Jews believe that Antisemitism is on the rise.[143] This rise in Antisemitism occurs in conjunction with, and has been further fueled by governmental measures taken by countries to control the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic: in a number of European countries, protesters of government-mandated pandemic restrictions, including France, the United Kingdom and Germany, wore the yellow Star of David (replacing the word 'Jew' with 'unvaccinated'), thereby drawing comparisons between restrictions to personal freedom, such as being mandated to wear a mask in specific spaces, and the persecution of the European Jews during the Third Reich.[144] A young German woman compared herself to the resistance fighter and member of the White Rose, Sophie Scholl, stating that she feels like Sophie Scholl because she has been "active in the

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[140] Geoffrey Short and Carol Ann Reed, *Issues in Holocaust Education* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publication, 2004), 6-7.
[141] Paula Cowan and Henry Maitles, "Does addressing prejudice and discrimination through Holocaust education produce better citizens?" *Educational Review*, Vol. 59, Iss. 2 (2007): 115-130, 125.
[142] Miriam Scharlibbe, "*Wie Parteien versuchen, der AfD den Begriff "Heimat" abzujagen*," *Neue Westfaelische*, 21.10.2017, http://www.nw.de/nachrichten/regionale_politik/21954248_Wie-Parteien-versuchen-der-AfD-den-Begriff-Heimat-abzujagen.html Accessed May 7, 2018.
[143] Antonia Mortensen, Melissa Bell, and Saskya Vandoorne, "A hate-filled attack made a grandson of a Holocaust survivor understand their experience a little more. But he decided to buck their advice," *CNN*, July 8, 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/01/europe/european-antisemitism-pandemic/index.html Accessed July 20, 2021.
[144] *The Associated Press*, "Confrontation at German coronavirus protest goes viral," November 22, 2020, https://apnews.com/article/international-news-hannover-coronavirus-pandemic-germany-the-holocaust-1c379428683efcd141a6f2ced52043a8 Accessed July 20, 2021; Toby Axelrod, "Germany's antisemitism commissioner urges ban on wearing yellow star to protest pandemic lockdowns," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, May 10, 2021, https://www.jta.org/2021/05/10/global/germanys-antisemitism-commissioner-urges-ban-on-wearing-yellow-star-to-protest-pandemic-lockdowns Accessed July 20, 2021; "Shocking rise of Holocaust trivializing yellow stars across Europe," *Antidefamation League*, June 2, 2021, https://www.adl.org/blog/shocking-rise-of-holocaust-trivializing-yellow-stars-across-europe Accessed August 1, 2021; "German call to ban 'Jewish star' at Covid demos," *BBC News*, May 7, 2021, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57020697 Accessed August 1, 2021.

resistance, giving speeches, going to protests, distributing flyers."[145] On a similar note, an 11-year old girl compared herself to Anne Frank, as she was forced to celebrate her birthday quietly so that her neighbours would not know that she had invited friends for the celebration, which was in violation of the government restrictions.[146] How serious the German government takes this new rise in Antisemitic hate is reflected in the appointment of Felix Klein as the national commissioner for Antisemitism in Germany in 2018.

This constellation – the apparent disconnect between existing German efforts to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust, and the emergence of extreme nationalistic and exclusionary social and political attitudes - invites us to consider this time as a crucial moment to reassess how we educate about and commemorate the Holocaust, and how we can make the legacy of this dark past meaningful in a conciliatory way.

1. Gedenkstaetten, Denkmaeler, and Deutungshoheit: The emergence of Holocaust commemoration and education in Germany after the Second World War:

The commemoration of the Holocaust in the contemporary German context is remarkable in its vast diversity of scope, focus, and representation. Further, while decentralized, it has incorporated a highly specialized pedagogy, which is practiced in the numerous *Gedenkstaetten* [memorial sites] – including but not limited to former concentration camps - across Germany. Due to numerous complexities, such as the division and subsequent reunification of Germany, local socio-political trends and perceptions, funding, and so on, a detailed breakdown of these changes would go beyond the purpose of this dissertation. As a number of seminal publications provide detailed information on the chronology of Holocaust education in the German context, I will here only summarize some of the key issues which have informed German Holocaust education and commemoration over the decades since the Second World War and illustrate on the example of the memorial site Dachau, how the material and mnemonic shape of a site is informed and determined by numerous external forces and agents.

While former concentration camp sites served as memorial sites in both East and West Germany, it was only in West Germany that the *Gedenkstaetten* were dedicated to the commemoration of the specifically Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Some of these memorial sites came into being in the 1960s, largely due to the efforts of activists, such as survivors and local residents, and often in the face of considerable resistance by the surrounding community. Individual and grassroot efforts at commemoration have been a cornerstone of Germany's memory politics since 1945. As Jenny Wuestenberg has illustrated, the country's present memorial landscape is the result of a wide range of earlier initiatives that symbolically and literally unearthed past.[147] Individuals and groups challenged the political elite's authoritative representations of the past and succeeded in generating a significant change in Germany's memorial landscape. This memory 'from below' was driven by citizen's initiatives, leftist politicians, and artists, who created a *Gedenkstaettenbewegung* [memorial site movement] and

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[145] Ben Knight, "Coronavirus: German foreign minister slams Covid protester's Nazi resistance comparison," *Deutsche Welle*, November 22, 2020, https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-german-foreign-minister-slams-covid-protesters-nazi-resistance-comparison/a-55692332 Accessed August 1, 2021.
[146] "German protestors compare Covid-19 restrictions to Nazi Germany," *World Jewish Congress*, November 25, 2020, https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/german-protestors-compare-covid-19-restriction-to-nazi-germany-11-3-2020 Accessed August 1, 2021.
[147] Jenny Wuestenberg, *Civil Society and Memory in Postwar Germany* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Geschichtsbewegung [history movement], which promoted a self-reflexive and critical examination of the past.[148] Individual activists and diverse groups from various contexts, such as university staff, community college or university working groups, or union initiatives, began to research the history of National Socialism in the local context literally "from the ground up," and initiated a special form of extra-academic *Geschichtswerkstaetten* [history workshops] and alternative archives.[149] These initiatives were not only concerned with their local history, but also with topics that were often overlooked, such as the workers' movement and forced labour. These emerging initiatives to educate and commemorate were critical of traditional academic history research, whose publications were not commonly consumed by the general public.[150]
Calling into question academic scholars' monopoly on history, memory activists challenged both the framework of academic historical scholarship, and the claims of traditional institutions over the interpretation of history itself.[151] As a result of a generational change, these memory activists eventually entered the elite institutions of memorialization – thereby contributing significantly to the contemporary landscape of Germany's democracy as well as the commemoration of the Holocaust. While the confrontation with the Holocaust was central in these initiatives, after German reunification, the memory of repression in former East Germany also began to assume a significant role. The early initiatives to commemorate the victims of the Nazi era were less concerned with pedagogical and historiographical questions, such as the use of sources or relevant documentation; instead, it was considered important to break the forgetting and silence, and to provide information. While the circumstances and events which contribute (or hinder) the emergence of memorial sites are different as a result of local and regional contexts, the discourses of the creation of the memorial site Dachau may serve as an example of the innate push-and-pull between different interested stakeholders which oftentimes accompanies such processes.

2. The evolution of the Dachau memorial site between 1945 and German reunification

Between 1945 and 1948, the American army used the facilities of the former camp to hold functionaries of the Nazi party and members of the SS; after the transfer of the control of the site to the Bavarian government in 1948, the site was used as an initially temporary refugee camp, but was effectively in use until 1964, when the camp was closed for this purpose.

The commemoration of the victims was initiated by survivors of the camp, and focused mainly on the area of the crematoria, where a small exhibition was created with the support of American military authorities. This exhibition, which included mannequins who represented specific torture methods of the SS, was intended to demonstrate the brutality and suffering which the prisoners had to endure. This exhibition not only depicted the reality of the camp uncompromised and indiscernible, but also connected the terror with the very location which is perhaps the strongest manifestation of the extermination policy of the Nazis: the crematoria. It is therefore not surprising, that by 1953, the Bavarian government decided to "remove the exhibition from the crematorium and close the doors to the public," and by 1955, the mayor of

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[148] *Ibid*., 203-204.
[149] *Ibid*., 128-131; Etta Grotrian, "Kontroversen um die Deutungshoheit: Museumsdebatte, Historikerstreit und 'neue Geschichtsbewegung' in der Bundesrepublik der 1980er Jahre," *Zeitschrift fuer Religions – und Geistesgeschichte*, Vol. 61, Iss. 4 (2009): 372-389, 380.
[150] *Ibid*., 381.
[151] *Ibid.*, 379.

Dachau and the district administrator requested the dismantling of the crematoria.[152] This imposition of the decision to close the exhibit, in which the survivors were not included, and to want to remove the crematoria altogether are reflective of the desire of local officials (and citizens) to literally erase the site which where the ultimate extermination of the victims was performed, and which by its very continued to ascribe responsibility. The removal of the crematoria was only prevented as a result of protests by international interest groups and former prisoners.

Over the next years, the evolving Cold War had considerable impact on the priorities and directions of the development of the memorial site. Until 1950, no communal representation of interests among the survivors existed, and in fact, communist interests of former prisoners collided with anti-communist groups. The Comite International de Dachau (CID), which was officially founded in 1950, was originally created by former inmates during the time of the camp's operations.[153] A significant reason for the creation of the CID was to set itself apart form communist organization – while at the same time, it was meant to represent all prisoners. However, due to the CID's seat in Brussels, and the divide of the Cold War, the majority of the committee consisted of survivors from France, Belgium and the Netherlands, who had considerable lobbying power. Former prisoners from specifically Eastern European countries were notably underrepresented, which was subsequently reflected in choices of languages, representations of prisoners' groups etc.

The 1960s were a point in time, when the usage, perception and representation of the site began to change considerably, largely as a result, and in response to wider context of global, national and regional changes. The specific changes which took place are, similarly to the intent to demolish the crematoria, representative of the desire to mitigate the commemoration of the suffering and deaths of the victims in a way that created a further chasm between the reality of the camp and the representation of the memorial site in the present.

It is noteworthy, that the first step toward a formalized commemoration on the site was the opening of the Catholic Mortal Agony of Christ Chapel on the site in 1960. Subsequently, Bishop Johannes Neuhaeusler, proposed the creation of a Jewish as well as a Protestant memorial, which were both opened in 1967.[154] Finally, in 1968, the International Memorial was completed.

In 1965, a new documentary exhibit was opened in the still existing main building of the camp as the first significant exhibition in a former camp in West Germany, and "was also a decidedly political exhibition" in that it was "a direct reaction to attempts to deny and underplay National Socialist crimes."[155] The museal and pedagogical approach in this exhibition was mainly to present evidence and to create emotional responses in the visitor through, for example, mural-sized photographs taken by perpetrators, showing suffering individuals or victims as a dehumanized mass. These images were meant to shock visitors and to confront them directly with the horrific realities of camp life. In addition to the exhibition, two barracks were

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[152] Harold Marcuse, "*Dachau im Wandel: 1945 – 2005. Konzeptionen und Ziele der Vermittlung*," in *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau: Erlebnis, Erinnerung, Geschichte* ed. Anne Bernau-Fieseler and Fabien Theofelakis (Muenchen, 2006), 42.
[153] Martin Schmidl, "Dachau 1965: The Metaphorical Exhibition Making at the Memorial Site," *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 24, Iss. 1 (2011): 59-78, 59.
[154] Harold Marcuse, *The Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933-2001* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[155] Aurelia Bertron and Claudia Frey, *Projectfeld Ausstellung: Eine Typology fuer Ausstellungsgestalter, Architekten und Museologen* (Birkhaeuser, 2012), 296.

reconstructed on the grounds of the memorial site. As the site was now under the responsibility of the Bavarian state administration of castles, parks, and lakes, it is perhaps not surprising, that – specifically after the removal of a considerable number of original buildings - the memorial site took on the appearance of a well-tended space resembling a park, including vast graveled areas and paths, well-tended lawns, and white-washed structures, overlooked by the religious sites and the international memorial. This clean, innocuous environment bears no resemblance to the topography of the camp during its operation, and thereby has effectively transformed this *Schandfleck* [eye sore] into a heavily sanitized and trivialized version of history. By assuming the 'management' of the site, and its memory – which, at this point, could no longer be denied or dismantled – the state and the city effectively took charge of the interpretation and representation of the dark history of the site, incorporating it into wider topography of sites of benign points of interest (such as parks and castles) in Bavaria.

The subsequent decade saw further increases in visitor numbers to the Dachau site, particularly by German school classes: between 1973 to 1979, the number of students who visited the memorial site increased from 400 to 500 to 5,000 to 6,000 annually.[156] Furthermore, the number of visitors overall expanded from over 300,000 in the early 1960s to almost 1 million in 1986, with increasingly larger numbers of foreign visitors. Yet, in spite of these significant changes in public interest, visitor numbers and demographics, the infrastructure of the site as well as related services in the surrounding community did not change until the turn of the century. This statis, which only began to shift gradually in the mid-1990s, speaks to the desire of the state and the city to leave this material aspect of the past untouched and unchanged – thereby underscoring the separation between the present and the past, as well as the perception that the memory of the site was static in itself rather than a dynamic, evolving process. Again, a first step toward a change in the perception of the site was prompted not by internal consideration, but as a response to the considerable changes in visitor numbers and the emergence of a global Holocaust memory: a resolution was passed by the Bavarian authorities in 1989 to change the "'memorial site' into a 'place of learning.'"[157] These changes in public interest and the consumption of 'difficult history,' in turn, prompted a reflection on and transformation of established practices of Holocaust commemoration and education. Memorial sites no longer catered exclusively to survivors, local visitors and school classes, but instead had to accommodate diverse demographics with different perspectives. Yet, it should be noted, that at this point in time – aside from small memory projects dedicated to specific individuals or groups - no educational or commemorative site dedicated to the legacy of the Third Reich existed in the city of Munich. However, the late 1980s mark the beginning of first considerations and conversations: a first proposal to create a House of Contemporary History was made by an FDP politician [*Freie Demokratische Partei* – free democratic party] in 1988, arguing that "Munich had distinguished itself in repressing the horrors of Nazism in a near perfect manner," and pointing to the necessitate the need for the city to address its Nazi past, rather than pointing to the Dachau memorial site.[158] The project failed to materialize, as a result of disagreements between the city council, the city planning office, and the state, suggesting that the purpose of the museum would be at odds with the city's reputation.[159]

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[156] Harold Marcuse, "Das ehemalige Konzentrationslager Dachau: der muehevolle Weg zur Gedenkstaette," *Dachauer Hefte*, Vol. 6 (1990): 182-205.
[157] Marcuse, *The Legacies of Dachau*, 389.
[158] *Ibid*.
[159] *Ibid*. Note: The Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism was created 15 years later.

3. Germany's Holocaust memorial culture after reunification

While grassroots commemorative initiatives continue to be a fundamental aspect of Germany's diverse memorial landscape, from the point of German reunification, the commemoration of the Holocaust began to assume a considerably more homogeneous, streamlined approach, which was reflected, for example, in funding support and the professionalization of Holocaust commemoration and education.[160] This "normative regime of remembrance"[161] came to dominate in official German memory institutions, expressed through dedicated monuments, such as the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe as well as through a reorientation of the work of the *Gedenkstaetten.*[162] From the 1990s onward, the federal government accepted financial responsibility for the preservation and new design of memorial sites. A national program of memorial pedagogy [*Gedenkstaettenpaedagogik]* was developed with the goal of creating sites of learning with a standardized, professional approach. Through this process, Germany's landscape of individually developed *Gedenkstaetten* lost its explicitly grassroot character of memory work 'from below.' Instead, these now federally-supported memorial sites became a state-run, coordinated project of research and teaching project of unprecedented scope.[163]

Germany's memorial sites are a hybrid of heritage site, historical museum and memorial: *Gedenkstaetten* are located at authentic historical sites, which is a major point of attraction for visitors who expect an auratic, emotional experience of original material remains. The sites are viewed as containers of stories and memories as such facilitate imagination of historical events. As with all experiences of historical "authenticity," however, this sense of proximity to the past is an illusion, as all sites have undergone several decades of repurposing, neglect, restoration, preservation, modification and modernization to accommodate increasing visitor numbers, including cafes or restaurants, bookstores, and seminar facilities.[164] While *Gedenkstaetten* are not-for-profit organizations, they nevertheless follow to a similar "customer-oriented" logic to other cultural institutions in order to accommodate the high numbers of national and international visitors: the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, for example, underwent a large-scale redesign of the visitor path which now leads again through the original entrance gate with the "*Arbeit macht frei*" sign, revised the exhibition space, added a visitor center to its premises and is currently developing a large parking lot to accommodate tour buses. In addition, cities and towns actively promote the memorial sites alongside other tourist attractions on their tourism websites,

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[160] Prior to German reunification, *Gedenkstaetten* did not receive federal funding; instead, they received minimal support from individual states, communities, or private associations, and their existence depended on the commitment of survivors and/or other civic activists.

[161] Wuestenberg, *Civil Society*, 8.

[162] Sonja Klenk, *Gedenkstaettenpaedagogik an den Orten nationalsozialistischen Unrechts in der Region Freiburg-Offenburg* (Lit Verlag Berlin, 2006).

[163] Elke Gryglewski, (ed) *Gedenkstaetten Paedagogik: Kontext, Theorie und Praxis der Bildungsarbeit zu NS-Verbrechen* (Metropol Verlag, 2015), 39.

[164] As a result, the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau receives annually over 800,000 visitors, Sachsenhausen near Berlin and Buchenwald near Weimar both host approximately 500,000 visitors each per year.[164] Over half of the visitors to the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau are from foreign countries. "*KZ-Gedenkstaette* Dachau," *Stiftung Bayerischer Gedenkstaetten*, http://www.stiftung-bayerische-gedenkstaetten.de/de/gedenkorte/kz-gedenkstaette-dachau Accessed May 11, 2018; "*KZ-Gedenkstaetten melden deutlich hoehere Besucherzahlen,*" *Evangelisch.de,* https://www.evangelisch.de/inhalte/112567/24-01-2015/kz-gedenkstaetten-melden-deutlich-hoehere-besucherzahlen Accessed May 11, 2018; Fabrizio Bensch, "*KZ-Gedenkstaette laedt AfD-Politiker Hoecke aus – Er will hin,*" 26.01.2018, *Berliner Morgenpost*, https://www.morgenpost.de/politik/article209402627/KZ-Gedenkstaette-Buchenwald-laedt-AfD-Politiker-Hoecke-aus.html Accessed May 12, 2018.

and oftentimes, a specific supporting infrastructure has been developed to accommodate the vast visitor numbers; in the case of the Dachau memorial site, for instance, a specific bus service has been installed to take visitors from the train station Dachau to the memorial site, while the site has also added a restaurant, a bookstore, and other facilities.

Gedenkstaetten use similar processes as museum exhibits: existing or rebuilt structures house exhibits, including the display of objects and documents as well as the testimony of victims (in the form of audio- or film recordings, or as documents), which have been carefully arranged and interpreted by professional staff. The exhibition areas of memorial sites are considered to be the most important element in the pedagogical programming in that they present not only historical objects or documentation but produce meaning through specific display strategies and interpretation – similar to museums.[165] Yet, *Gedenkstaetten* differ significantly from other heritage sites or museums as they use their space and exhibitions not only for educational programs, but also for memory work and commemoration: the site's topography and exhibition areas are not intended for leisure purposes, but to facilitate imagination and support the commemoration of the victims.

Today, images of individuals or of terror and violence are represented in a different format, from the placing and size of the images in the exhibition space to providing context with detailed explanations. With the development of a specialized *Gedenkstaettenpaedagogik* in the 1990s, previous approaches to the role of emotions in historical learning have been revised and the cultivation of empathy is since considered the "royal path:"[166] during a 2012 forum for educators and pedagogues in Berlin, state secretary of the Brandenburg ministry for education, youth and sports, Burkhard Jungkamp stated, "children and adolescents must learn emotionality and empathy – also in history lessons."[167] History education, thus, is linked with moral instruction and intended to foster positive connections to human rights, social justice and democracy. A more tolerant and inclusive society which provides equitable opportunities for all its citizens, regardless of their ethnic background or place of birth, seems a particularly desirable goal in the context of Germany's increasingly diverse population. Yet, as Turkish anthropologist Esra Özyürek demonstrates in her research,

> "Holocaust education and contemporary understandings of empathy, in teaching about the worst manifestation of racism in history, can also at times be a mechanism to exclude minorities from the German/European moral makeup and fold of national belonging."[168]

Özyürek calls into question specific perceptions and concerns which are expressed by Germans over the way in which the Muslim minority – such as Turkish Germans and Arab-Germans - engages with the topic Holocaust, who are believed to not show sufficient empathy toward the victims, not learning the correct lessons and to re-import antisemitism. Indeed, this concern over whether or not learning about the Holocaust is and should be relevant and important to any new German citizen was indicated by Kurt Steiner, a member of parliament for the Christian Social Union in Bavaria, in 2015, when he stated that

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[165] Geissler, *Individuum und Masse*, 20; Juliane Brauer (ed) *Emotionen, Geschichte und historisches Lernen* (V & R Unipress: Goettingen, 2013), 244; Gryglewski, *Gedenkstaetten Paedagogik*, 179; Klenk, *Gedenkstaettenpaedagogik an den Orten nationalsozialistischen Unrechts*;

[166] *Ibid*., 75.

[167] Brauer, *Emotionen, Geschichte und historisches Lernen*.

[168] Esra Özyürek, "Rethinking empathy: emotions triggered by the Holocaust among Muslim-minority in Germany," *Anthropological Theory*, Vol. 18, Iss. 4 (2018): 456 – 477, 456.

> "Muslims and refugees do not have any connection to the history of German National Socialism. And this should remain so […] One should be careful with such students because they face cognitive and emotional challenges."[169]

In the context of her research, Özyürek interviewed guides, teachers and students (both German and non-German born) about their experiences learning about the Holocaust, and found that among "second and third generation Muslim-Germans was a sense of unfairness because discrimination towards Muslims in Germany and around the world goes unrecognized,"[170] and because the German education system "does not recognize their identities, Turkish and Arab background immigrants focus on themselves instead of on the victims of the Holocaust."[171] At the same time, this emotional response is dismissed by educators as "victim competition."[172] What emerges from Özyürek is the national significance of the commemoration and education of the Holocaust as fundamental to German identity, which is thus perceived as "a core guarantor for the stability of Germany's liberal-democratic order"[173] Germans with (Muslim) immigrant backgrounds, then, are viewed as disrupting this national project.[174] Thus, while the education on and commemoration of the Holocaust has become as significant global as well as national contexts, it is specifically the link to the nation state and identity which raises particular concerns and questions. Michael Rothberg and Yasmin Yildiz point to the paradox inherent in this connection, arguing that

> "in the aftermath of the Nazi genocide, it has seemed necessary to preserve an ethnically homogenous notion of German identity in order to ensure Germans' responsibility for the crimes of the recent past, even though that very notion of ethnicity was one of the sources of those crimes."[175]

The authors pose that ethnicity and xenophobia in the German context have not been neutralized, and rather indicate that "ideologies and structures of domination forged in one era may outlive their apparent demise."[176] Rather, German Holocaust memory should take into account the increasingly diverse population and to seek interactions between legacies of different histories.[177]

This, however, creates predicaments for individual memorial sites, which seek to connect their specific local historical context with the decades-long controversies and resistance over the creation of memorial sites, and to connect the historical education with the challenges of a contemporary, increasingly diverse German society. At the memorial site Dachau, for example, the story is presented as a narrative of perpetual progress, while circumventing a critical engagement with racist and antisemitic attitudes which continued to exist long after the liberation of the camps, or related societal concerns, such as xenophobia, neo-Nazis and Holocaust deniers: [178] the

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[169] *Ibid*., 457.
[170] *Ibid*., 466.
[171] *Ibid*., 458.
[172] *Ibid*., 466-469.
[173] Alice von Bieberstein, "Not a German past to be reckoned with: Negotiating migrant subjectivities between *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* und the nationalization of history," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 22, Iss. 2 (2018): 902-919, 909, in Esra Özyürek "Rethinking empathy", 463.
[174] See also: Damani Partridge, "Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental Memory amidst Contemporary Race," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 52, Iss. 4 (2010): 820 – 850.
[175] Michael Rothberg and Yasemin Yildiz, "Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany," *Parallax*, Vol. 17, Iss. 4 (2011): 32-48, 35, in Esra Özyürek "Rethinking empathy", 464.
[176] *Ibid*., 46.
[177] *Ibid*., 38.
[178] Gryglewski, *Gedenkstaetten Paedagogik*.

information presented begins with the emergence of National Socialism and the creation of the specific site, culminates with the Holocaust, and closes with the liberation of the camps and a brief reference to the uses and repurposing of the site post-war, thereby giving the impression that the past has been successfully dealt with as it is now incorporated and institutionalized into a commemorative framework. The problem with this approach, as Macdonald has pointed out with respect to the Nazi Party grounds in Nuremberg is that "[e]ven well intentioned attempts to openly face the past can end up telling redemptive stories."[179]

The national significance which is ascribed to the Holocaust in the German context does not necessarily resonate with all aspects of German society: the study *Opa war kein Nazi*, which investigated the communicative memory of the Nazi era in German families, led the researchers to conclude that a vast discrepancy exists between official memory discourses and private remembering: the study found that while the generation of the grandparents was often idealized by the third generation (the grandchildren), the Holocaust "does not have a systematic place in non-Jewish German family memory" [my translation].[180] If the persecution of the Jewish community appears at all in familial memory, Germans did not perceive themselves as perpetrators, but rather as victims or even as helpers of persecuted Jews. The study also indicated that the relationship between forced labourers and German families for whom they worked – for example, on a farm or in the household – was often perceived by the German families as naturally and harmless as a student exchange.[181]

Scholars and critics have pointed to the tension between the efforts to provide education on Holocaust and Germany's changing socio-political landscape. The established national discourse encourages silence about present-day xenophobia and racism, which is framed as a problem of the extreme right rather than embedded in broader German attitudes towards its increasingly diverse population and aspiring immigrants to the country.[182] These concerns are arguably confirmed with the emergence of *Alternative fuer Deutschland* (AfD), which raises important questions about the impact of the commemorative and educational efforts in Germany in relation to the prevention of future injustices.[183]

4. The engagement of German corporations with their difficult heritage

During post-war negotiations by the German government, specific victim categories were excluded from compensation to facilitate speedy economic recovery. These included the groups with the least amount of political capital: former forced labourers from Eastern Europe.[184] In

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[179] Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage,* 190.
[180] Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller and Karoline Tschnuggnall. *"Opa war kein Nazi": Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedaechtnis (*Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002), 210.
[181] Welzer, Moller and Tschnuggnall, *Opa war kein Nazi*, 101.
[182] See for example: Damani Partridge, "Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental memory amidst contemporary race, "*Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 52, Iss. 4 (2010): 820-850; Rothberg and Yildiz, "Memory Citizenship," Mark Silberman and Florence Vatan, *Memory and Postwar Memorials* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Oliver Von Wrochem and Christine Eckel, *Nationalsozialistische Täterschaften: Nachwirkungen in Gesellschaft und Familie* (Metropol Verlag, 2016); Cornelia Wilhelm, *Migration, Memory and Diversity: Germany from 1945 to the Present* (Berghahn Books, 2016).
[183] Paul Hokenos, "Antisemitism is still alive in Germany 70 years after the Holocaust," *CNN*, January 25, 2018, https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/25/opinions/anti-semitism-in-germany-hockenos-opinion/index.html Accessed January 25, 2018; Christoph Hasselbach "Holocaust remembrance in Germany: a changing culture," *Deutsche Welle*, January 27, 2019, https://www.dw.com/en/holocaust-remembrance-in-germany-a-changing-culture/a-47203540 Accessed March 1, 2020.
[184] Jeanne Dingell, "The Question of the Polish Forced Labourer during and in the Aftermath of World War II: The Example of the Warthegau Forced Labourers*," Remember.org,* 1998, https://remember.org/educate/dingell Accessed December 3, 2020.

view of the Wirtschaftswunder and the stellar economic recovery of West Germany and German corporations, the German corporations' "fear for image and profit" was another contributing element in the denial and silencing of this topic.[185]

By the 1980s, Hans Mommsen conducted and published academic research on forced labour for Volkswagen, and several campaigns by American lawyers against Swiss banks proved successful. Klaus Freiherr von Muenchhausen, a legal advisor for former forced labourers, began to take an interest in the issue of compensation in the 1980s and sought to reach an agreement with the federal German government. After the government initially declined the claims, attorneys eventually shifted their focus to corporations. Pointing specifically to the increasing public and international attention, Muenchhausen stated that "without American lawyers, it might not have gone so far – the fear of VW or Daimler or Siemens wouldn't be there, because they sell their products in North America, not Africa."[186] [my translation] German corporations "suddenly remembered the 50-year old history […] now, there is a different tone, the companies accommodate, and the new chancellor made the issue a top priority. But this has very little to do with insight or atonement."[187] [my translation]

While companies such as Volkswagen initially responded by denying any legal responsibility and therefore compensation, emerging global and national discourses of Holocaust commemoration, memorialization, and education began to draw increasing public attention, and German corporations felt increasingly forced to address their complicity with Nazi crimes. Corporations' initially considerable resistance eventually gave in to the threat of public controversy and potential damage to their brand image, and a broader movement toward a fundamental solution began to take shape, as a number of organizations signaled willingness to contribute to the German Forced Labour Compensation Programme (GFLCP), established in 2000, including Bayer, BMW, Daimler-Chrysler, Deutsche Bank, Siemens, and Volkswagen.[188]

National and local museums and memorial sites, as well as corporate museums, responded by incorporating representations of forced labor into their exhibition spaces; some German corporations changed their position to and engagement with their dark past entirely, and instead hired historians to conduct further research. Yet, the transformation of long-standing attitudes and perspectives of German corporations did not occur overnight, and changes were only implemented after initial resistance failed: historian Dr. Andreas Heusler, who began to explore

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[185] *Ibid*; See also: Christoph Kapalschinski, "*Warum deutsche Unternehmer den Blick in die Archive scheuen*," 17.10.2019, *Handelsblatt*, https://www.handelsblatt.com/unternehmen/dienstleister/vergangenheit-aufarbeiten-warum-deutsche-unternehmer-den-blick-in-die-archive-scheuen/25114270.html?ticket=ST-22373825-9XiKZrcY Accessed December 3, 2020; Heinz-Roger Dohms, "*Deutsche Unternehmen Firmen und ihre Nazi-Vergangenheit*," 05.10.2007, *Stern*, https://www.stern.de/wirtschaft/news/deutsche-unternehmen-firmen-und-ihre-nazi-vergangenheit-3264642.html Accessed December 3, 2020; Michael Marke, "*Das schwere Erbe der deutschen Wirtschaft*," 29.01.2005, *Deutsche Welle*, https://www.dw.com/de/das-schwere-erbe-der-deutschen-wirtschaft/a-1470339 Accessed December 3, 2020; "*Wie die Geschichte die deutsche Wirtschaft einholt*," *Manager Magazine*, 27.08.2020, https://www.manager-magazin.de/unternehmen/wie-die-nazi-geschichte-die-deutsche-wirtschaft-einholt-a-f29b7051-3334-4efa-afca-2b03d8348029 Accessed December 3, 2020.

[186] Patricia Schlesinger, "*Angst um Image und Profit - Deutsche Konzerne erinnern sich an ihre Zwangsarbeiter*," 19.11.1998, *Das Erste*, https://daserste.ndr.de/panorama/archiv/1998/Angst-um-Image-und-Profit-Deutsche-Konzerne-erinnern-sich-an-ihre-Zwangsarbeiter,erste6962.html Accessed December 3, 2020.

[187] Schlesinger, "*Angst um Image*."

[188] In 2000, the GFLCP was established and paid out more than 4.37 billion Euros to about 1.7 million survivors (which averaged to between 2,500 to 7,500 Euros). Erik Kirschbaum, "Germany ends war chapter with "slave fund" closure," 12.06.2007, *Reuters* Foundation, https://jp.reuters.com/article/us-germany-nazi-fund/germany-ends-war-chapter-with-slave-fund-closure-idUSL126092920070612 Accessed December 3, 2020; Wolfgang Heumer, "*NS-Opfer ziehen weiter vor US-Gerichte*," 02.04.1999, *Ingenieur.de*, Accessed December 3, 2020.

the issue of forced labour in Munich as a researcher in the early 1990s, described his experience of accessing the archives of local companies during an interview. With the support of the *Kulturreferat* (Department of Arts and Culture) of the city of Munich, he reached out to over 70 organizations but

> "you really ran into walls, you get the cold shoulder…hardly any companies responded, or they said that they had nothing, or that to their knowledge they had nothing to do with forced labour during the Second World War…the material which was offered by a few companies which were cooperative was meaningless, basically useless."[189] [my translation]

The collapse of the GDR provided Heusler with access to previously unavailable information, such as documentation on BMW, which had been kept by the Deutsche Bank, who had been a main shareholder of BMW during the Third Reich. These documents allowed Heusler to establish the history of the most significant private employer in Munich. Heusler cited significantly higher numbers of forced labourers in contrast to Moennich's earlier publication, which had presented the issue of forced labour at BMW as a marginal topic. BMW responded to Heusler's publication, in which he indicated in a footnote that Horst Moennich's narrative on BMW only contained half of the truth, with the demand to add a corrective note to all printed copies, and that he furthermore should apologize in a public letter to the Sueddeutsche Zeitung. With the support of the *Kulturreferat*, Heusler declined to follow the demands with no further consequences.

Around the same time period – 1993 - a small group of visitors from the Czech Republic who had been former forced labourers for BMW were hosted by the city of Munich, however the corporation declined an invitation to meet with them: according to the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, upon inquiry, the press speaker Gernot Brauer stated that "with individual inquiries one is 'rather a bit hesitant,' after all, everyone wants to be treated equally, but otherwise it was already the style of the company to deal with the past 'relatively actively.'" The city of Munich apologized to the visitors, but not the corporation.[190]

Over the past three decades, the memory of the Third Reich has gradually become integrated into the corporate memory of German companies to an extent where it has become a reference point, an expression of responsibility, and, arguably, a positive asset.[191] The public and visible incorporation of the difficult heritage of forced labour into memory discourses of German corporations bears marked similarities to the maturation and transformation of German Holocaust memory: after a long period of "structural amnesia," German companies began slowly to acknowledge their dark pasts, though only in response to local, national and international changes.[192] Yet, Macdonald cautions us to consider that

> "[s]elf-disclosure in the political realm is often couched in a discourse and valuing of 'transparency'. While now frequently understood as a marker of democracy and a good

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[189] Interview Dr. Andreas Heusler, *Stadtarchiv* Munich, November 28, 2018.
[190] *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, Das verlorene Jahr, November 6/7, 1993, BMW Archiv. Note: in the year after the article in the Sueddeutsche Zeitung on BMW's treatment of the visitors from the Czech Republic, the company organized a small reception during which a board member gave a speech, and in the following year, BMW supported the visit financially. Heusler's interpretation of a cultural shift inside of German companies during the late 1990s is indicative of this different engagement with the Czech visitors.
[191] Rupnow, *Vernichten und Erinnern*, 168.
[192] Assmann, "Ancient Egyptian antijudaism."

itself […], transparency is also part of the way in which contrition is usually performed. That is, apologizing for past wrongs also requires a bringing of those wrongs into view."[193]

During our interview, Heusler used the term "entrepreneurial wisdom" [my translation] to explain this increasing openness of German corporations to deal with their difficult heritage.[194] This change in position is echoed by Constanze Werner in her 2006 publication on BMW, noting that "a realization transpired [at BMW] that this [previous] view of forced labour was neither legally tenable nor, above all, corresponded to the facts."[195] While the deliberate engagement of German corporations, such as BMW, with their difficult heritage forced labour is arguably modeled on Germany's national approaches to the commemoration of the Holocaust, I propose that in the context of a corporation, this approach does not reflect the same processes of maturation and civic engagement as the emergence of Germany's Holocaust memory.[196] As noted at the beginning of this chapter, Germany's commemorative landscape relating to the Third Reich and the Holocaust is highly diverse and is the result of citizen-driven initiatives, thereby incorporating not only diverse voices and perspectives, but also illustrating the presence of countless sites relating to the Nazi terror throughout Germany (thereby calling into question the notion that the German population was unaware of the crimes). The representation of the company's difficult heritage, however, emerged out of corporate decisions and was executed by the company's own staff. Returning here to Heusler and Freiherr von Muenchhausen, I argue that the emergence of the difficult heritage of forced labour in the corporate memory discourses of German companies is only marginally related to atonement and largely to "entrepreneurial wisdom." After all, one - if not the primary - goal of corporations is to generate profits; to further meet their financial goals, corporations rely on philanthropic contributions, cultural programming and initiatives, and by supporting various social causes, which are used as a form of public relations or advertising, through which a company's image or brand can be further enhanced.[197] A corporate museum is inherently an extension of the company and its interest which tells a historical narrative, albeit from the self-interested perspective of the corporation with its colonial roots and capitalist interests.

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[193] Sharon Macdonald, "Is 'Difficult Heritage' Still 'Difficult'? Why Public Acknowledgment of Past Perpetration May No Longer Be So Unsettling to Collective Identities," *Special Issue: Museums Managing the Tensions of Change*, Vol. 67, Iss. 1-4 (2016): 6-22, 16.

[194] Assmann, "Ancient Egyptian antijudaism."

[195] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW,* 372.

[196] In this context, I would like to point to the consistency in the timing and format of these emerging representations across institutions: for example, the Volkswagen opened a memorial site dedicated to forced labourers in 1999; BMW's corporate museum reopened in 2008 after a redesign incorporated the company's the use of forced labour; Berlin's Jewish Museum opened the first comprehensive exhibition on forced labour during the Nazi era in 2010 ; in 2014 Audi conducted historical research into its Nazi past and since 2018 offers projects, presentations, and seminars for apprentices in collaboration with the Flossenbuerg memorial site. Since 2019, visitors to the Audi museum in Ingolstadt can listen to the testimony of former forced labourers at a newly installed media station. This consistency of the inclusion of the topic of forced labour specifically in relation to German corporations highlights the responsibility that is being assumed by these memory institutions, but also points to a, arguably, formulaic approach among corporate museums.

[197] Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer, "The Competitive Advantage of Corporate Philanthropy," December 2002, *Harvard Business Review*, https://hbr.org/2002/12/the-competitive-advantage-of-corporate-philanthropy Accessed December 3, 2020.

CHAPTER 2. Encountering the field: exploring power in processes of history-writing

> "[…] physical memorial sites are especially significant for being the subjects of intense civil society mobilization [….] the politics of memorialization are closely related to more general politics of memory, but their outcomes in the form of monuments do not neatly correspond to individual or intersubjectively held memories. What makes the politics of memorialization fascinating is that through them, decisions are made about what gets 'set in stone' in public spaces. Memorials evoke the contention and power relationships that brought about their construction." (Wuestenberg, 2017)[198]

> "As Eric Hirsch has emphasized, landscapes are never purely representational, but rather exist as part of people's everyday practices and are therefore in constant flux. At the same time, they are consciously interpreted as well as manipulated by various actors and may thus indeed be associated with outwardly political or ideological perspectives, especially if we deal with the memory of violence. This tension, which is often accompanied by a differentiation between local and outsider perspecKtives, can be grasped as the relationship between landscape as memory and landscape of memory." (Schramm, 2014)[199]

As I have outlined above, I chose an autoethnographic approach as one of the conceptual frameworks and methodologies through which I documented and analyzed my data collection, in an effort to challenge "privileged academic discourses," and to "counter colonizing voices" while also to present an alternative perspective.[200] At the same time, by drawing from Rothberg's concept of the "implicated subject," which explores questions relating to collective responsibilities with respect to the legacies of the past by "those who have inherited or who have otherwise benefited from histories of perpetration."[201] While I had made the decision to use an ethnographic approach in the writing of my dissertation prior to undertaking my field research, during my data collection it became increasingly clear to me that this approach would allow me to trace my own sense of disorientation and confusion, which I experienced at times, as well as to pay attention to my own emotional responses and priorities. I therefore chose to present this chapter, which outlines the diverse responses and investments of the different interested parties and stakeholders, through an autoethnographic lens so as to highlight the different perspectives which were shared by individual stakeholder. As an 'implicated' researcher, some of these different perspectives were more or less closely aligned with my own observations and considerations, and thus gave me opportunities to reflect on how my own situatedness informed and directed my research approach, questions and conclusions; for example, the twelve human skeletal remains which had been discovered on site in 2017 assumed a specific pivotal role in my perception of the project, while the issue of the potential Jewishness of the victims (and steps which were taken to

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[198] Wuestenberg, *Civil Society*, 11.
[199] Katharina Schramm, "Introduction: Landscapes of Violence: Memory and Sacred Space," *History and Memory*, Vol. 23, Iss. 1 (2014): 5 – 22, 10.
[200] DeLeon, "How do I begin to tell a story that has not been told?" Hughes and Pennington, *Autoethnography.*
[201] *Ibid*., 83.

establish that these victims were supposedly of non-Jewish heritage) was a particularly intriguing and concerning aspect for me.[202]

In this chapter, I summarize and trace my engagement with key stakeholders, specifically illustrating their specific investments and interests. Throughout the time of my data collection, I found myself emotionally oscillating between two polar opposites: on the one hand, I was sympathetic to the passionate and personally motivated activism of Klaus Mai and the local residents of the Ludwigsfeld, who advocate for a greater effort to commemorate the history of the site and to support the socio-cultural life of the unique community, which has systematically been neglected by the city of Munich. At the same time, after my encounters with professional experts of institutions or the city of Munich, as well as representatives of BMW and the property owners, who offered their detached and somewhat prosaic perspectives, at times, I felt defeated in my quest to identify the exact point of friction. While the dissatisfaction of the memory activists blended both the deliberated neglect of the history of the site by institutions with the indifference toward their own community by the city of Munich, the experts - while perceptive of the discontent of the local residents in the Ludwigsfeld and the need for a memorial project - tended to focus on specific aspects, such as finances, heritage conservation procedures, city planning, conflicting interests, and the feasibility of the site from a catchment perspective and with respect to the number of potential visitors (or lack thereof). According to the experts, agreement exists between all parties about the need for a memorial project – the issue lay mainly in the details of the scope and finances - while the memory activists felt that their concerns and needs were perpetually disregarded. Yet, I had to remind myself, these different interpretations of the conflict are the defining elements of the struggle between memory activists and institutions, and my disorientation was a manifestation of this process.

What emerges from the different perspectives and priorities shared with me by involved stakeholders and interested parties is the push-and-pull between different agents and stakeholders which is inherent in the production of historical narratives, as well as the particularly complex and often contested dynamics which surround "difficult" or "dissonant" heritage. At the same time, through such "politics of memorialization […] decisions are made about what gets 'set in stone' in public spaces. Memorials evoke the contention and power relationships that brought about their construction."[203] Thus, by examining the perspectives of individual stakeholders as well as steps taken by these interested parties, the processes through which heritage as well as memorial sites are negotiated become transparent, including, for example, processes of legitimization and regulation by acknowledged experts and institutions, through which an overarching 'approved' narrative about a site is created.

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[202] I believe that my own early experiences with the Holocaust, its overt focus on the Jewish victims – presented largely as dead bodies – informed my particular focus not only on the human remains but also on the possibility of the victims' possible Jewish ancestry. The individual human remains which were discovered at the site in 2017 represent the suffering of the individual victims in a particularly poignant way (in contrast, for example, to photographs depicting mounds of dead bodies, in which the individual suffering is overwritten through the merging of the deaths and suffering of all victims); at the same time, although some information about these victims could be gleaned from their remains, such as their age and gender, for example, their individual identities will likely be never known. To me, the attempt to establish the possible Jewish (or non-Jewish) ancestry of these individuals was a continuation of the oppression, dehumanization and finally murder of these persons.

[203] Wuestenberg, *Civil Society*, 11.

1. A personal encounter with history

In the spring of 2016, in my home in Victoria, British Columbia, I scrolled on my laptop through news headlines about Germany in general, and Munich in specific, as was my occasional habit while having my morning coffee. Rather unexpectedly – and clearly effectively – two headlines caught my eyes: "*Liegt unter diesem Geruempel ein KZ-Massengrab*?" [Could there by a mass grave under this rubble related to a concentration camp? My translation] and "*Vergessenes Verbrechen: NS-Massengrab in Allach*" [Forgotten crimes: a Nazi mass grave in Allach- my translation].[204] Having grown up in Munich, I was very familiar with the site of the former concentration camp Dachau, but – perhaps like many locals – I had never heard of any camps in Allach. The inflammatory language of 'junkyard,' 'mass grave,' and 'forgotten crimes' conjured images of deliberate desecration, neo-Nazis and disrespectful disturbance of the dead. While it seemed quite reasonable to assume that countless mass graves lay still forgotten in fields, ditches and woods across rural Eastern Europe as it has been established by recent research by Father Patrick Desbois and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) it appeared to me incomprehensible how a mass grave could still exists and simply have been forgotten in a suburb of Munich.[205] After all, people had always lived here – somebody must have remembered.

Reading both articles, I learned that a local historian Klaus Mai, a district politician affiliated with the SPD (Social Democratic Party) and an expert on the subcamp Allach, voiced the concern that mass graves dating back to the time of the camp's operation could still be on site.[206] Mai points to documents which seem to suggest that a mass grave could potentially be located in the area of the so-called 'Jewish camp,' and Mai assumes that most of the dead were Jewish. Two memorial plaques – in German and in French - were mounted on a barracks, the single remaining structure of the former camp. Mai not only strongly rejected the current use of the site as a junk yard, but also the disrespect to which the presumed mass graves were subjected. Mai was joined in his concern by Charlotte Knobloch, the president of the Jewish community of Munich and upper Bavaria:

> "If the suspicions of district historian are confirmed, everything must to be done to treat the remains of these people with dignity. This place reflects symbolically the repression and historical oblivion of a certain long phase of German post-war history."

Mai estimates the number of dead at 2,300. The corporation BMW, who had exploited these prisoners, and profited from their efforts, rejected any association with its dark past for a long time, but had gradually become more interested and willing to address its role during the Third Reich.

Further online research into the history of the subcamp Allach proved dissatisfactory: five German scholarly publications examined the role of BMW during the Third Reich as a key producer of aircraft engines, as well Dachau's many subcamps and external commands (including

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[204] See: Hildebrand, "*Liegt unter diesem Gerümpel ein KZ-Massengrab*?"; Zeller, „*NS-Massengrab in Allach*."
[205] Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews (*New York: Palgrave, 2008); International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, "Killing Sites: Research and Remembrance," in *IHRA Series 1 (*Berlin: Metropol, 2015); United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, https://www.ushmm.org/ Accessed September 13, 2016; Yad Vashem, http://www.yadvashem.org/ Accessed September 13, 2016.
[206] Note: While Mr. Mai is not an academically trained historian or archivist, he has conducted a considerable amount of archival research.

the Allach camp complex), in addition to the non-academic, self-published work by Klaus Mai. The patchy information left me with countless questions: considering the sheer size of the camp and number of inmates, how was it possible that such a site could simply be forgotten? What had happened to the actual physical camp after the war? Had no survivors ever talked about their experiences in the Allach camp? Why was one of the memorial plaques in French, and why did they not mention any Jewish victims or the company BMW? Why did a private person conduct extensive research and not an established institution such as the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau? And why were the city of Munich and the company BMW not more prominently involved with furthering this research and creating a permanent and notable memorial site?

Perhaps the site of the former subcamp complex Allach also resonated with me on a deeply personal level, as a result of the familiarity of the area from my earliest encounters with the Holocaust in general and the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau in particular. It was in the late 1980s and early 1990s, that I regularly visited the memorial site Dachau by myself. The site unsettled and disturbed me in ways I could not comprehend or articulate: I felt a vague confusing sense of guilt, shame and implication, but what most upset me was the loneliness of the site (and by extension its dead) and the homey every-day life which continued undisturbed outside the walls of the memorial site. Aside from the occasional school classes, I encountered very few visitors, and on some days, it seemed as if I was the only person in the entire memorial site. I remember one autumn day when a low mist hung over the area, the tips of the poplar trees seemingly reaching into the fog while a pale sun provided an otherworldly glow. I stood on the gravel outside the crematoria building, and after the crunching of my steps had ceased, the silence was almost deafening. As I stood outside the building, I could hear water drops dripping from the trees' branches, and I could not quite reconcile the magnitude of the historical events which had occurred at this place, with the location of the site surrounded by residential houses, and the seemingly complete absence of any public interest. My almost ritualistic visits were perhaps an attempt to bridge the enormity of the events and its silence, and the undisturbed world outside of which I was a part. Since I rarely encountered other visitors at the site, I began to wonder who this site was catering to – aside from school classes – as it clearly did not seem to attract local or international visitors. This absence of interest was mirrored, in my interpretation, in the neglect and lack of commemorative efforts at the Allach site.

2. Navigating power and authority in history writing: whose narrative is it?

My first encounter with the site of the former Allach camp in 2017 coincided with a point in time when seemingly unrelated individual and public interests and agendas surrounding the location collided, thereby generating a wider interest and first small waves of disturbance, which resulted in a flurry of newspaper articles on the topic, albeit with changing tone: an article in the *Juedische Allgemeine* in July 2016, for instance, used the more measured headline "*Suche im Ludwigsfeld: im ehemaligen Dachauer Aussenlager werden Graeber von KZ-Haeftlingen vermutet*" [Search in the Ludwigsfeld: graves of prisoners are suspected in the former Dachau subcamp – my translation]. Here, the attention-grabbing term 'mass grave' became simply 'graves,' while no references to the location, or 'forgotten crimes' were made. Instead, the article pointed to the obligation of the city of Munich - based on the contracts of Paris from 1954 - to

guarantee the untouchability of grave sites of victims of the Nazi regime [*Graebergesetz*.][207] As a result of Mai's insistence of possible mass graves of "Shoah victims" on site of a former camp, and particularly due to the history of the area, archaeological excavations were carried out on site to finally provide an answer to the concerns. Mai pointed out that so far, the city as well as the scientific community – that is, local memory institutions such as the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau and the *NS-Dokumentationszentrum* Muenchen, as well as local scholars - had simply 'forgotten' about the camp, which is perhaps not surprising, as the article noted, since the opening of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism only came to pass after many years of hesitant dealings with the Nazi past in the city of Munich. The article states that

> "due to the involvement of the company BMW, nobody in the city of Munich wanted to openly address that the truth that the principle 'extermination through labour' also occurred on the soil of the former 'capital of the movement.'" [my translation][208]

Returning to sensational headlines of October 2016, the *Abendzeitung* announced: "*KZ-Aussenlager Dachau NS-Massengraeber in Allach? Ergebnisse im November*" [Nazi mass graves in Dachau subcamp Allach? Results in November – my translation.][209] According to the article, archaeological excavations had been initiated in response to Mr. Mai's concerns about possible mass graves, because the area is earmarked for development. In correlation with the excavations, a round table under the leadership of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism was established by the major of the city of Munich, which included all relevant stakeholders. Only a month later, the *Merkur* announces: "*Ehemaliges KZ-Aussenlager: Kein Massengrab gefunden*" [Former subcamp: no mass grave has been found – my translation.[210] The article states, that the assumption of mass graves of former camp prisoners was not confirmed, and that the archaeological excavation of four of the seven potential grave sites, did not provide any indication of human remains; at the same time, various objects such as articles of clothing and crockery have been retrieved.

In the summer of 2017, I had the opportunity to meet Klaus Mai and his partner, Gerlinde Dunzinger, for the first time, albeit briefly. After generously inviting me for breakfast to their apartment in the *Hasnbergl*, a city quarter in the north of Munich, the couple enthusiastically shared their interest in and knowledge of the site with me, while Klaus kindly provided me with several of his publications on the Ludwigsfeld. During our first conversation, I learned that Klaus has a personal connection to former concentration camp Dachau: at the age of 21, his father was transferred into the camp in the context of the *Sonderaktion Wehrmacht* (SAW) – soldiers who had been handed over to the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) for disciplinary or judicial penalties. These SAW prisoners were a unique category of prisoners and received specifically harsh penalties in some camps. The scope of this prisoner category is still contested, but it is estimated that

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[207] For more information see chapter 5.
[208] Helmut Reister, "*Im ehemaligen Dachauer Außenlager werden Gräber von KZ-Häftlingen vermutet*," 04.07.2016, *Juedische Allgemeine Zeitung*, https://www.juedische-allgemeine.de/unsere-woche/suche-in-ludwigsfeld/ Accessed September 1, 2017.
[209] *Deutsche Presseagentur* "*KZ-Aussenlager Dachau NS-Massengraeber in Allach? Ergebnisse im November*," 11.10.2016, *Abendzeitung Muenchen*, https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/muenchen/ns-massengraeber-in-allach-ergebnisse-im-november-art-364478 Accessed September 2, 2017.
[210] *Muenchner Wochenanzeiger*, "*Archäologische Untersuchungen: Ehemaliges KZ-Außenlager: Kein Massengrab gefunden*," 11.11.2016, https://www.wochenanzeiger.de/article/174177.html Accessed September 2, 2017.

between 550 and 750 German soldiers were sent to concentration camps.[211]

Mai's father was first incarcerated in Gross-Rosen and was transferred to Dachau after four months, and subsequently sent to other locations – "a regular career in concentration camps," as Mai noted - including Natzweiler, until he was liberated on a transport out of Dachau. He was a baker by trade, and Mai believes that this occupation may have saved his father's life, as he was assigned to work in the kitchen, which did not only offer greater protection from the elements, but also provided better nourishment. Mai, born in 1952 in Munich, shared some recollections he has of his father, which to arguably to some extent resemble the experiences of children of Holocaust survivors in that memories of the camp appear as short vignettes. Mai noted that his father specifically shared these stories with him as a child and teenager:

> "I had to walk along the *Lagerstrasse* [camp road] [during visits to the former concentration camp Dachau] together with my father to the church with the bronze crucifix, next to it is the Jewish memorial site."[212] [my translation]

Old acquaintances of his father regularly visited, and "they always met, sometimes also drank, and sometimes also drunk. And that loosened [his] tongue. There were some remarkable people." As a child, while Mai had the awareness that his father was internally broken, he was also conscious of the specific climate in post-war Munich:

> "In the beginning they [his father and other former prisoners] didn't dare to say it in public [that they had been incarcerated in a concentration camp]. In Bavaria, they said, oh well, there must have been a reason why they were in the camp."[213]

In literature on the experiences of the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, specific patterns have been noted, which resemble to some extent the experiences of Mr. Mai as a child of a German, non-Jewish concentration camp survivor: Ruth Wajnryb describes that fragmented information about events are oftentimes delivered in formulaic utterances, and while these fragments lack in chronology and context, they nevertheless constitute a form of knowledge.[214] These vignettes resemble what Marianne Hirsch refers to as "post-memory," and Carol Kidron's "matrix of silence:"[215] a simultaneous knowing and yet unknowing; tangible evidence of the past, yet only fragments of information. The seed for Mai's commitment to make visible the memory of the former forced Allach camp, and specifically his dedication to unearth the names of those who perished at the site, may lay in his early encounters with the emotional, psychological and physical aftermath of the trauma of the camps. At the same time, Mai's engagement also echoes Rothberg's concept of "implicated subject," in that Mai is genealogically implicated through his relationship with his father, as well as his own experiences with the memorial site. While not himself a victim or perpetrator of the Third Reich himself, Mai is nevertheless entangled with a familial and national past which he inherited.

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[211] Hans-Peter Klausch, *Antifaschisten in SS-Uniform. Schicksal und Widerstand der deutschen politischen KZ-Häftlinge, Zuchthaus- und Wehrmachtstrafgefangenen in der SS-Sonderformation Dirlewanger* (Edition Temmen, Bremen 1993); Hans-Peter Klausch, *Die Bewährungstruppe 500. Stellung und Funktion der Bewährungstruppe 500 im System von NS-Wehrrecht, NS-Militärjustiz und Wehrmachtstrafvollzug* (Edition Temmen, Bremen, 1995); KZ- Gedenkstätte Neuengamme*, Wehrmacht und Konzentrationslager: Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Verfolgung in Norddeutschland* (Edition Temmen, Band 13, 2012).

[212] Interviews Klaus Mai, Munich, October – November 2018.

[213] *Ibid*. Mai also learned that his father had been able to safe Jewish prisoners prior to their deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Mai discovered pictures of the survivors during his research.

[214] Ruth Wajnryb, *The Silence: How Tragedy Shapes Talk*, (Allen & Unwin, 2001), 37.

[215] Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press, 2012); Carol Kidron, "Toward an ethnography of silence: the lived presence of the past in the everyday life of Holocaust trauma survivors and their descendants in Israel," *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 50, Iss. 1 (2009): 5-19.

After an apprenticeship as a machinist, Mai studied law, political sciences, and philosophy, and became a teacher and researcher. Mai is an active member of the SPD, and since his retirement, has been deeply engaged in archival research, and local concerns.[216] Mai began in 2012 to research the history of the former forced labour camp Allach, thereby functioning as what sociologist Yifat Gutman calls "memory activist."[217] According to Gutman, memory activists can take responsibility for the past as they work toward a more just future, through "strategic commemoration of a contested past outside state channels to influence public debate and policy," and "use memory practices and cultural repertoires as a means for political ends, often (but not always) in the service of reconciliation and democratic politics."[218]

Mai hosted his first exhibition in 2013 at the occasion of 60th anniversary of the Ludwigsfeld along with a publication, followed by a further exhibition about the camp in 2014, including an additional publication. A further volume was published in 2015, a special print on occasion of the 71st anniversary of the camp's liberation in 2016, and finally the book "*Die Toten von Dachau-Allach – zum Sterben nach Dachau*," [The dead of Dachau-Allach – to die in Dachau – my translation] in which he published for the first time a list of victim names. Mai expanded this list in 2017, alongside further information about the subcamp complex, and in June 2017, Mai also shared his findings in an exhibition. Mai undertakes regular walking tours in the Ludwigsfeld for interested participants and is a strong advocate for the creation of an exhibition and seminar space dedicated to the former subcamp complex Allach in the former canteen building which had been added to the remaining barracks.[219]

The results of Mai's extensive archival research are voluminous and remarkable. However, while my first meeting provided me with a much better understanding of the complexities of the current situation – which had been difficult to grasp from afar – I felt utterly overwhelmed and confused by the vast amount of intersecting and overlapping information. Very quickly, I began to realize that the little that I had thought I had understood about the former Allach subcamp complex, as well as the contemporary Ludwigsfeld, was either incorrect or misinterpreted. Yet, the more I delved into Mai's publications, the more confused I became by the multiple events, sites, groups of prisoners, as well as at times contradictory and conflicting timelines. Likewise, my very first brief visit to the Ludwigsfeld enhanced my sense of disorientation only further, mainly due to the peculiar homely, insular, village-like character of the settlement, but also because the area where the archaeological excavations were carried out was completely fenced off, as well as shielded from views by large tarps. While this first encounter with stakeholders and the location confirmed my intrigue with the war and post-war history of the site, it did little to provide any sense of clarity or understanding. But my bewilderment was soon to be magnified.

During the excavation in the summer of 2017, 12 human skeletal remains were discovered, but notices in the press only appeared in October, after a press release by the Munich Documentation

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[216] Interviews Klaus Mai, Munich, October – November 2018; FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie.*
[217] Yifat Gutman, *Memory Activism: Reimagining the Past for the Future in Israel-Palestine* (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 2017).
[218] *Ibid*., 1-2.
[219] Interviews Klaus Mai, Munich, October – November 2018.

Centre for the History of National Socialism:[220] an article in the *Abendzeitung* states that "*Das LKA untersucht die Toten - KZ-Aussenlager: Zwoelf Skelette in Allach gefunden*" [The state criminal investigation office examines the dead – subcamp complex: twelve skeletons found in Allach – my translation].[221] According to the final report of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism, it is likely that the dead were victims of the typhus epidemic which ravaged the camp after the liberation. It was further noted that the assumption that mass graves could potentially be located on the property of the former subcamp was not confirmed.[222] Countering, Klaus Mai states that the dead are victims of the camp, regardless, and because eleven victims were found in one pit, "one could almost speak of a mass grave."[223] Mai is satisfied with the findings, as his suspicions that victims of the Nazi regime were still buried on site had been confirmed. The Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism declared the archaeological excavations as completed and concluded that further plans were the responsibility of planning authorities. In consultation with survivors' associations and institutions, such as the memorial site Dachau, the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism decided to bury the dead in a nearby cemetery in a multi-religious ceremony. Intriguingly, while previous articles had mentioned 'Holocaust victims' or 'Shoah victims,' no further references to the possibility of a Jewish ancestry of one or several of the victims are made.[224]

The first question that came to my mind in response to these mind-boggling conclusions revolved around the discovery of twelve human skeletal remains, and the declaration that suspicions of existing mass graves on site were not confirmed. In order to enhance my understanding of the technical term 'mass graves,' I reviewed existing literature, and learned that different criteria and definitions exist among forensic experts: according to the United Nations, a mass grave is a location where three or more bodies are buried and are victims of executions, and not having died in combat or armed confrontations; Mark Skinner, on the other hand states that a mass grave needs to contain a minimum of six individuals, while Arthur Mant notes a minimum of two individuals, as long as they are in close physical contact, and Schmitt suggests a minimum of two individuals who share the same manner and background for their demise.[225] The team of forensic anthropologists who had examined the human remains in situ also rejected the term 'mass grave,' and instead used the term 'communal grave.'[226]
Considering the disagreement among experts about the definition of a mass grave or a communal grave versus the demise of the twelve individuals on the site of the former forced labour camp

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[220]"*Abschluss der Grabungen auf dem Gelände des ehemaligen KZ-Außenlagers Allach*," 19.10.2017, NS-Dokumentationszentrum Muenchen, https://www.ns-dokuzentrum-muenchen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/08_presse/pdf/pm_nsdoku_allach_19102017.pdf Accessed October 25, 2017.
[221] Von Steinburg, "*Das LKA untersucht die Toten.*"
[222] *Der Standard*, "*Untersuchungsbericht Kein Massengrab im KZ-Außenlager Allach*
[223] Von Steinburg, "*Das LKA untersucht die Toten.*"
[224] Simon Schramm, "*Siedlung Ludwigsfeld:Zwölf Skelette*," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 19.10.2017, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/siedlung-ludwigsfeld-zwoelf-skelette-1.3716329 Accessed October 25, 2017.
[225] Arthur Mant, "Knowledge acquired from post-War exhumations," in *Death, Decay, and Reconstruction: Approaches to Archaeology and Forensic Science* ed. A. Boddington, A. N. Garland and R. C. Janaway (Manchester University Press, 1987), 65–78; Mark Skinner, "Planning the archeological recovery of evidence from recent mass graves," *Forensic Science International*, Vol. 34 (1987): 267–287.
[226] Unrecorded conversation with forensic anthropologists of AnthroArch GbR, Munich, November 2018. Note: Polish anthropologist Roma Sendyka theorizes the affect of unmarked grave sites, considering them as "non-sites of memory," in that they do not bear any visible markers which set them apart or facilitate commemorative practices. At the same time, because they are sites with a history of violence, they are nevertheless different from the surrounding landscape. See also: Sendyka, "Sites that Haunt;" ---. Sendyka "Prism: Understanding Non-Sites of Memory."

Allach, I wondered whether the squabble over the required number of dead in a pit as well as over the time of their death (prior to or after liberation) was perhaps beside the point, considering that this had little consequence for those twelve individuals who had undoubtedly perished prematurely on the site of a former Nazi camp and as a direct result of Nazi ideology.

My second question related to the potentially Jewish identity of one or several of the victims. Why was it significant whether the victims were Jewish, and how would it be possible to determine whether skeletal remains were Jewish – specifically in consideration of individuals who had assimilated or converted from Judaism - unless personal items were discovered with the victims? The obvious answer is that if the remains would have been determined to be Jewish, this would have cancelled any future plans of development of the area: even if it might have been possible to circumvent the *Graebergesetz,* the Jewish burial law *halacha* strongly condemns excavations.[227] Therefore, to rule of the potential Jewish heritage of the interred individuals ensured that the law of *halacha* did not apply, and the discovery of the skeletal remains was therefore just a logistical but not a religious matter.[228]

My third question concerned the apparent gap in information between the summer, when the findings were made, and the announcement in the press in October, and furthermore, on the same note, the rather speedy and cut-and-dry manner in which the dead were exhumed, with the plan to be reburied elsewhere, and a completion of the excavations. A particularly poignant comment to an article on the findings in *Der Standard* sums up the pragmatic process:

> "It's that simple…do an archaeological investigation, secure the finds, and a provide a decent burial of the human remains. And then you can start building. Why doesn't this work with us (for example, Graz)? Well, I can actually give the answer myself.)" [229] [my translation]

After the discovery and exhumation of the twelve skeletal human remains, the *Wuerzburger* firm FranKonzept, which undertakes assessments, and develops exhibition concepts and design, was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study by the Department of Arts and Culture of the city of Munich, and the memorial site Dachau.[230] The summary at the very beginning of the study, which was published in June 2018, provides an intriguing snapshot of the particular constellation of socio-political, economic and cultural interests, investments, needs and demands, which – after the discovery of the human skeletal remains – required concrete and tangible steps toward a resolution:

> "In the context of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the National Socialist concentration camps, efforts toward a historical examination and an appropriate representation of the subcamp complex Allach assumed a new dynamic. An exhibition, as well as several publications, a perpetuation of memorial events, and finally a large-scale excavation in the area of the former camp, during which the remains of twelve victims were discovered, generated public attention, and also pressured local authorities,

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[227] Rabbi Yitzchok Breitowitz, "The Desecration of Graves in Eretz Yisrael: The Struggle to Honor the Dead and Preserve Our Historical Legacy," *Jewish Law*, https://www.jlaw.com/Articles/heritage.html Accessed November 1, 2017.
[228] For more information see chapter 5.
[229] *Der Standard*, "*Untersuchungsbericht Kein Massengrab im KZ-Außenlager Allach.*"Original text in German: "*so einfach geht das…archäologisch untersuchen, Funde sichern und gefundene menschliche Überreste anständig bestatten. Und dann kann gebaut werden. Warum funktioniert das bei uns (z.B. Graz) nicht? Gut, die Antwort kann ich mir eigentlich auch selber geben ;-)*"
[230] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie.*

memorial institutions, documentation centres and museums to address the topic in a more consistent fashion."[231] [my translation]

What is apparent from this brief excerpt is the dynamic struggle and negotiation between different agents and stakeholders in the production of historical narratives.[232] Through the transition of a local perspective of the past to a broader global level, the dominance of specific authorized frames of reference is challenged through the expansion of the network of concerned agents and stakeholders.[233] This expansion from a local to a global level is clearly reflected in the commission of the feasibility study, which highlights how the increasing pressure necessitated governmental institutions, authorities, and organizations to seek out avenues toward an the potential creation of a memorial project.

Prior to the feasibility study, information about the former Allach camp, and particularly those who perished on site, had been generated mainly by Klaus Mai. While five academic publications have examined different aspects of BMW's exploitation of forced labourers through historical analyses, this form of literature is usually not consumed by the general public; Mai's publications and exhibitions, on the other hand, are aimed at the non-academic community, and are therefore arguably more accessible. The feasibility study thus reflects both the move of the local heritage to a global level, and furthermore, the assumption of 'possession' of the past (as tangible and intangible heritage) by state-level organizations, which thereby control and legitimize the historical narrative and the dissonant heritage of the site. Through Klaus Mai's lobbying work as an activist, "process of rooting [the history and memory of the former Allach subcamp complex] in official collective memory" has begun.[234]

The feasibility study notes that its objective is to determine the possibility and scope of a future memorial project at the site of the former forced labour camp Allach – todays *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld – and to examine all aspects which may be relevant in relation to a memorial project, including data such as the potential number of visitors to the site and traffic. FranKonzept notes that while all key players - the memorial site Dachau, the city of Munich and the BMW Group - are aware of the necessity of a suitable memorial project, none of the stakeholders have taken any initiative toward a concrete realization of such a project. Through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) possibilities and barriers were examined, and a number of measures and modules introduced, which offered a degree of flexibility in their implementation. The study highlights specific areas of interest, including the history of the camp complex, and the post-war history of the site, and also points to a range of different forms of dissemination of information, including brochures, special exhibits, documentary film, and a youth education project.[235] With respect to the site itself, FranKonzept names as specific limitations the lack of options for rooms; the challenge of maintaining and supervising a site; the issue of property ownership; the anticipated relatively modest visitor resonance; and provided three different models for a potential future memorial project in the Ludwigsfeld: concept A includes a large park-like documentation area around the barracks building, with an additional memorial stone in area of former cemetery. Concept B includes a platform with information boards on the green space to the west of the barracks building, where currently memorial events are

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[231] *Ibid*., 4.
[232] Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*.
[233] Peter Biehl, Douglas C. Comer, Christopher Prescott, Hilary A. Soderland (eds), *Identity and Heritage: Contemporary Challenges in a Globalized World* (Springer, 2014).
[234] Jordan, *Structures of Memory*, 6.
[235] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 113.

held. Finally, concept C consists of a memorial stone and a platform with informational boards in the area of the former camp cemetery. Based on the various necessary requirements and measures, such as an agreement of property owners, purchases or long-term leases, investments and support, Concept B was proposed as having the greatest chances to find acceptance from finance partners, property owners, and the public, particularly in consideration of already occurring memorial events on site. This variation would include a return of the barracks to its original conditions and securing its preservation yet without any permanent usage.

From left to right: design concept A, B, and C.

Ausstellungsplattform beim Todesmarschmuseum Belower Wald.
Foto: Atelier Weidner Händle, Stuttgart

Example of exhibition platform at museum Belower Wald.

Figure 2

FranKonzept considers as potential target audience survivors and their descendants, students, and trainees of BMW, but estimates no more than 300 visitors per year. And while it is noted that a

[236] All images: FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 120 – 128.

larger memorial site would not be suited to the location, due to the traffic infrastructure, a smaller memorial project could be supplemented through temporary exhibition at the memorial site Dachau, the city of Munich and the BMW Group.

The results of the feasibility study as well as possible measures toward a memorial project were publicly presented on June 6th 2018. Libuše Vepřek, a local cultural anthropologist, attended the event, and described her experiences in her master's thesis: several experts - including representatives of the Department of Arts and Culture of the city of Munich, the director of the Dachau memorial site, a representative of the *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau [a survivor association of Dachau] along with a survivor whose father was imprisoned in Allach - were gathered in the front of the room on stage.[237] The experts emphasize agreement in that the Ludwigsfeld does not offer the necessary conditions for a museum. Members from the audience – several local residents of the Ludwigsfeld – gave voice to their desire to educate about the history of the site and to commemorate the victims based on a suggestion which has been proposed for more than four decades: to renovate the existing barracks and utilize the building for cultural purposes. The hopes and expectations of the residents and Klaus Mai are at odds with the presentation of the experts, and the atmosphere soon became charged. Due to a lack of consensus among the participants, the presentation was adjourned. Vepřek sums up her impressions of the evening:

> "What was negotiated tonight is of greater concern for the residents of the Ludwigsfeld than the planning of a possible memorial site. The discussion has a significantly larger meaning than the question for the appropriate commemoration of the victims of the former subcamp complex Allach. It is their concern to be given the opportunity to be active participants in all processes, to be heard and recognized as actors in the discourse. The question is rather, who is in charge of the *Deutungshoheit* [the power to interpret historical events – my translation] with its concurrent historical layers, which one of these layers will be emphasized, and how residents can be further appropriated and re-interpreted."[238] [my translation]

By directing the focus of the feasibility study toward models for more substantial memorial projects rather than a modest version which is envisioned by the memory activists, the study achieved two significant steps: first, it demonstrated the willingness of the city of Munich and local institutions to further enhance the representation of the site and acknowledgement of the significance of this history. Second, by establishing a lack of potential visitors and limitations in infrastructure, while at the same time pointing to the considerable cost involved in renovating the barracks, the study neatly closed the door on any projects which would incorporate the desire of the locals for a social meeting place.

This disappointment with the outcome of the feasibility study is also echoed in an article in the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, which states: "*Enttaeuschende Erkenntnis: Die richtige Form des Gedenkens – eine grosse Erinnerungsstaette beim frueheren KZ-Aussenlager Allach scheint zu teuer zu sein*," [Disappointing Finding/Outcome: the proper form of commemoration – a large

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[237] Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten*.
[238] *Ibid*., 4-5.

memorial site at the former forced labour camp Allach appears to be too expensive – my translation].[239]

3. Encountering the stakeholders

In October 2018 I travelled to Munich to conduct my research in the field, which would consist of interviews with involved persons, organizations, and institutions; archival research; ethnographic research in the memorial site Dachau, at the settlement Ludwigsfeld, and the BMW museum with a focus on the representation of forced labour. In retrospective, my interviewees can be divided into four distinct groups based on their role or affiliation: 1. The memory activists: Klaus Mai and his partner as well as specific individuals from the Ludwigsfeld; 2. Representatives of the memorial site Dachau, the foundation of Bavarian memorial sites; 3. Representatives of institutions affiliated with the city of Munich as well as the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism; and 4. Private organizations such as the BMW Group, a representative of one of the property owners, journalists, the archaeological and the anthropological firms who were involved in the excavations, and the Jewish community in Munich. As I have indicated earlier (and not surprisingly) I received vastly different responses from each of these groups, which were not only reflective of their particular role in relation to the site, but also of their interests and agendas.

I was warmly and generously welcomed by all memory activists, who invited me into their homes, to meals, and events. Conversations with the memory activists revolved around and alternated between the desire to find appropriate and dignified ways to commemorate the victims of the site as well as to provide educational material on the one hand, and the need to create a social meeting space in the Ludwigsfeld, which is envisioned as a pub/cultural centre in the remaining barracks. In the eyes of the memory activists, these two objectives are by no means mutually exclusive, and an exhibition space with respect to the former subcamp complex Allach could be incorporated into a social meeting space. The memory activists were particularly disappointed with the models for memorial projects proposed in the feasibility study, as they were considerably larger than what has been envisioned. The creation of a large-scale memorial site was never the objective, and Mai and the residents in the Ludwigsfeld are aware of the limited infrastructure, the issues of ownership, and the potential cost involved in restoring the barracks.

While representatives of the memorial site Dachau were sympathetic to the ideas of the memory activists, the focus here revolved largely around incorporating the memory of the Allach camp into the site's own permanent exhibition space, with the plan to add a media platform as well as an additional exhibit with objects which were found during the archaeological excavations. A first step toward the inclusion of the history of the site of the Allach subcamp complex into the educational and commemorative framework of the memorial site Dachau was the joint commission and funding of the feasibility study.

Representatives of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism considered the Allach site in the wider context of their own future project of an educational site in the location of a former forced labour camp of the *Reichsbahn* in Neuaubing, and also considered to potentially lead excursions to the Allach site, albeit with the Neuaubing

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[239] Thomas Anlauf and Jakob Wetzel, "*Enttäuschende Erkenntnis:Die richtige Form des Gedenkens*," 07. 06. 2018, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/enttaeuschende-erkenntnis-die-richtige-form-des-gedenkens-1.4006676 Accessed June 20, 2018.

site as a starting point.

The Department of Arts and Culture of the city of Munich clearly expressed that the building of a new cultural and social centre in the Ludwigsfeld was not feasible. However, Dr. Sabine Schalm indicated that additional information about the Allach site will be incorporated into an already existing cultural and educational format – the *Kulturgeschichtspfade* [cultural history trails – my translation.] A special brochure exists about the history of each district in the city, which includes a map with trails, and relevant historical information. By updating the brochure Schalm hopes to expand and tap into the already existing broad and free cultural offering. As the collaborator in the commission and financing of the feasibility study, the city has thereby also taken a first step toward incorporating the history of the Allach site into its educational and commemorative framework.[240] Arguably, through the commission of the feasibility study by two major institutions – the memorial site Dachau and the city's cultural department - (funded, respectively by the state and the city) and the plans to incorporate aspects of the history of the Allach site into already existing frameworks of education and commemoration, an Authorized Heritage Discourse emerges and *Deutungshoheit* is established: through the legitimization and regulation of this historical narrative through a selection of materials by professional experts and established institutions, an overarching narrative about the site is created. Thereby, the history of the former camp is no longer an exclusively local memory discourse, but it has been incorporated into regional, if not national memory discourses. The other two institutions which were involved in the roundtable – the foundation of Bavarian memorial sites and Bavarian state office for heritage protection – are somewhat further removed from the establishment of a memorial project: the foundation, albeit it is the sponsor of the memorial sites Dachau and Flossenbuerg and other sites in the state of Bavaria, is not directly involved with the management and logistical aspects of the sites. The state office for heritage protection was primarily involved in its expert role during the archaeological excavations.

The fourth group of concerned organizations and individuals was also the most diverse in their specific interests and roles: the BMW Group, although the direct cause for the creation and operation of the Allach subcamp complex, sees itself in a supportive rather than active role. The director of the archive (at this point), Mr. Manfred Grunert, assumes a particularly intriguing position in that, while he is an employee of the corporation and directly involved in the processes of collecting and archiving, he also takes a strong personal interest in the history of the site, which is reflected in his regular attendance of the informal small commemorative events in the Ludwigsfeld at the former barracks. Mr. Grunert thus, functions as a bridge between the impersonal and remote corporation and the deeply personal suffering of those who perished on the site of the former subcamp Allach. It is perhaps also Mr. Grunert personal engagement and interest in the history of the site that has contributed to the inclusion of this difficult heritage into the corporate space of the BMW museum. In this unique role, Mr. Grunert assumes the role of a memory activist, as well as that of the institutional memory. In an interview, Mr. Grunert states that

> "we have repeatedly considered how we want to deal with the *Deutungshoheit* of this history, and have come to a very very clear result, which concerns, by the way, not only this aspect but all aspects of BMW's history. We do not claim any *Deutungshoheit* of the history of our corporation….And as the foundation of that, we have agreed on the science, because

[240] Interview Dr. Sabine Schalm, *Kulturreferat* Munich, October 2018.

> that is a kind of global common sense, how one deals with history and we assume more of a network role."[241] [my translation]

Regarding the specific responsibility of the corporation BMW in their networking role, Grunert notes that

> "we foster people and support people who work on this topic. Whether it is a scientific project or….for a thesis or dissertation…we also have topics, questions here with the Ludwig Maximilian University which are discussed with the respective chair holders, if there is somebody who want to do something about this, they are very welcome."[242] [my translation]

Finally, Mr. Grunert highlights, that the records are extensive, not only in Germany but also in the USA, and that the corporation does not have the capacity to undertake research but is open to support other researchers.[243] Two specific references stand out in these statements: *Deutungshoheit* and science. The BMW Group acknowledges the necessity to embrace further research into the field and situates itself in a supporting role, while, at the same time, transferring the responsibility to the established experts and institutions. Thereby, the Group effectively underpins the claims to *Deutungshoheit* by professionals, academia and memorial institutions while, at the same time, the Group aligns itself with a scientific examination and interpretation, which further underscores BMW's commitment to address its dark past, albeit within an established framework.

Two independent organizations were involved in the archaeological excavations of the area and the forensic examination of the human remains: respectively the *Buero fuer Archaeologie Neupert und Simm GbR* and *AnthroArch GbR*. The research and findings of these two organizations, due to the nature of their profession, can perhaps be considered to be indisputable; yet, as these examinations were carried out in the wider context of the Allach site, the forensic anthropologists specifically were cautious about sharing their information. The final report on the archaeological excavation had been completed in 2017, and some of the findings were incorporated into the published feasibility study in 2018. Mr. Sikko Neupert from the archaeological firm was very forthcoming in generously sharing two reports with me. However, the results of the forensic examination had apparently not been published at the time of my research; although willing to meet in person, staff of AnthroArch GbR declined to have the conversation recorded, any note-taking on my part, or to share their findings with me, out of a concern over possible misinterpretations of the outcome of the examination. However, in March 2020, AnthroArch GbR kindly shared a print summary of their findings with me, which indicates that it was written in August 2017. While the reluctance of the forensic anthropologists to share their unpublished findings with me would likely be understandable in other contexts, in view of the specific sociopolitical and financial interests in the Allach site, alongside the conclusions which were drawn by Rabbi Yacob Ruza about the ancestry of the human skeletal remains, the hesitancy struck me as odd – specifically in consideration of the findings.[244]

A conversation I had particularly looked forward to and considered vital in my research was with Dr. Charlotte Knobloch of the Jewish community Munich. Dr. Knobloch had kindly agreed to meet with me in late November 2018, and consented to the recording of the

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[241] Interview Dr. Manfred Grunert, BMW Group, Munich, Nov. 21, 2018.
[242] *Ibid*.
[243] *Ibid*.
[244] For more information see chapter 5.

conversation, but requested to see my questions in advance, which I was happy to provide. A number of my questions revolved around Rabbi Ruza, and the decision regarding the non-Jewish ancestry of the human remains. Unfortunately, on the day when the interview was scheduled, the appointment was cancelled. As it was not possible to schedule a follow-up appointment in person, Dr. Knobloch's office offered that she would be willing to answer my questions in writing, however, I did not receive an answer after several follow-up emails.[245] This was particularly disappointing in parts, as I had hoped to gain a better understanding of the decision-making processes around the potential Jewish ancestry of the human skeletal remains. I am specifically concerned about the lack of representation of the Jewish community in Munich due to the possibility of Jewish victims at the site of the former forced labour camp Allach. As a non-Jewish researcher of German descent, I feel deeply uneasy about potentially misrepresenting a Jewish community, yet, at the same time, I had to ask myself why Dr. Knobloch, who is otherwise very outspoken about the need for a dignified treatment of Jewish victims, was not willing to respond to my questions.[246] In order to provide insight into how the decisions regarding the heritage of the human skeletal remains were made, I made dedicated and repeated efforts to connect with Rabbi Yacob Ruza in Israel by contacting various organizations, individuals, emails and phone calls, but I did not receive any response from Rabbi Ruza directly. I am therefore left with unsettling questions: why the reluctance to speak to me by Dr. Knobloch and Rabbi Ruza? Based on what methodology was it determined that the findings were not Jewish? What are the implications of this decision?

Another conversation I anticipated was with Mr. Josef Meier-Scupin, an established Munich architect, who served on several juries for competitions, and received numerous awards, including the German builders award, the German architecture award, and the German urban builder award.[247] Meier-Scupin is the representative of and speaker on behalf of the *Firma Hirmer* with decision-making competency, and in that role, was directly involved in the roundtable and the archaeological excavations. While Mr. Meier-Scupin was open to be interviewed by me, he

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[245] The questions I posted to Dr. Knobloch were: 1. In your opinion, how were the excavations and examinations of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach handled? 2. If I understand it correctly, the Munich Jewish community commissioned an Israeli Rabbi to examine the excavations in the Ludwigsfeld, and to determine whether Jewish victims may be buried in the area. The Rabbi determined that nothing suggested that Jewish victims were on site. In the same context, a statement was made that the discovered human remains had not been buried according to Jewish traditions. Thus, the permission was given to continue to excavations. First, can you please tell me who the commissioned Rabbi was who came to these conclusions? Second, can you please describe the criteria which contributed to the decision – on the one hand, it would be difficult to determine the Jewish heritage of a person from skeletal remains, on the other hand, it is unlikely that individuals who perished in a concentration camp would have been buried in a respectful manner. 3. If it would have been determined that the remains were Jewish, how would that have changed the subsequent discourse of the excavations and the status of the area? 4. Toward the end of the war, specifically Jewish prisoners from Eastern European countries were exploited in the framework of 'extermination through labour,' in various other subcamps of the main camp Dachau. Since several years, there is a struggle over the commemoration of the victims and representation of the past in some places. Can you please describe to what extent the Jewish community of Munich is involved in these negotiations, or positions itself?

[246] See for example: Helmut Schmidt, ""What Kind of Country Would Germany Be If Remembering the Holocaust Didn't Matter Anymore" - Interview with Dr. Charlotte Knobloch, President of the Jewish Community in Munich and Upper Bavaria," 20.08.2019, *Diplomatisches Magazin*, https://www.diplomatisches-magazin.de/en/article/deutschlands-koepfe-was-fuer-ein-land-waere-ein-deutschland-in-dem-die-erinnerung-an-den-holocaust-k/ Accessed September 2, 2019; Jakob Wetzel, "*Debatte um Stolpersteine: Gedenken, das entzweit*," 13.10.2014, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/debatte-um-stolpersteine-gedenken-das-entzweit-1.2170096 Accessed September 2, 2019; Margarete Moulin, "*Stolpersteine in München: Der Streit ums Gedenken*," 08.08.2016, *TAZ*, https://taz.de/Stolpersteine-in-Muenchen/!5324372/ Accessed September 2, 2019.

[247] "Josef Peter Meier-Scupin, Architekt," *archINFORM*, https://deu.archinform.net/arch/80422.htm Accessed September 2, 2019.

declined to be recorded, but allowed me to take notes.[248] Our meeting took place in his beautifully restored villa in the upscale district of Bogenhausen. First and foremost, Mr. Meier-Scupin wanted me to know how seriously and deeply the company Hirmer was in terms of their commitment to be culturally sensitive with respect to possible existing burials in the area. In order to prevent that interested parties could, as Mr. Meier-Scupin put it, "pull the Jewish card" (although he did not specify which individuals or groups or what the potential implications might be), several measures were taken already at the beginning of the archaeological excavation in the northern part of the former OT camp: hand-carved boxes were prepared in which potential findings could be placed, in addition to a designated container, where the remains could be examined and the boxes be stored. The site of the excavations was physically and visually completely shielded off, and not accessible for anyone, other than the developer and members of the round table. According to Mr. Meier-Scupin, several politicians wanted to visit the site, but were turned down. At the time of the findings, an internationally recognized Rabbi from Jerusalem with military rank was commissioned, to ensure the dignified treatment of the findings. While the skeletal remains were examined initially in situ, they were eventually placed into the boxes in agreement with the Rabbi, and the boxes were stored in specifically designated containers for several weeks. Subsequently, when coffins were provided for the dead, the skeletal remains were eventually transferred. According to Mr. Meier-Scupin, the word neo-Nazis was mentioned, and on the following day, the coffins were removed, albeit he did not provide information who made the reference to neo-Nazis, or who initiated the removal of the coffins. It is assumed that the dead were left behind after the closure of the former concentration camp cemetery. The builder wanted to ensure an intercultural ceremony and received a note from the *International Dachau Comite* with instructions for the treatment of the dead. The dead were placed into the coffins in a dignified position, and finally reburied. The Rabbi paid a second visit around the time of the burial. Upon the opening of one of the coffins, the Rabbi was deeply moved by the respectful treatment of the dead, which he documented in a very positive report. According to Mr. Meier-Scupin, several claims were made for the coffins and their content, although he did not specify by whom. The findings were initially kept confidential, out of a concern over conflicts of interests and district politics concern, although Mr. Meier-Scupin did not specify who had an interest in the findings, or possible district politic concerns. Only after a final report which was submitted to the major of Munich, was information about the findings of the human remains published. Meier-Scupin believes that a positive closure was achieved with the burial and highlighted that as far as plans for the site are concerned, the site of the findings of the human remains will always remain unbuilt. The development of a school is being considered south of the current soccer field – from Mr. Meier-Scupin's perspective, this would allow the residents to "live with the past, but to think toward the future." The builder mentioned a possible competition for a development, with the condition that the site of the findings will be considered, but also not be turned into a memorial site. As I left the villa and stepped out into the cooling sunny late afternoon, and slowly walked through the *Englischer Garten*, I had the strong impression, that Mr. Meier-Scupin is confident that the findings of the site have been appropriately dealt with and any controversy had come to an amicable closure: no Jewish victims had been found, no religious law had been violated, and the dead had been reburied in a multi-religious ceremony to pay respect to the unknown heritage of the individuals. Similar to my experiences with other experts, I was left wondering if I was chasing after something that did only exist in my imagination. Why did I

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[248] My notes from interview with Herrn Meier-Scupin, Munich, November 7th, 2018.

wonder about the potential Jewish ancestry of the human remains, when it was apparently clearly established by an expert that the dead were not Jewish? Why was I interested in the processes through which the dead were exhumed, stored, and re-buried when everything had been done 'by the book'? I came to recognize that I encountered this feeling in an almost predictable way when I encountered particularly positive assurances by key stakeholders, that the history of the Allach site was given the necessary and appropriate attention, and that there really was no issue, as the dead had been reburied in a dignified manner. Specifically the multiple references by Mr. Meier-Scupin, that experts and established institutions had been involved in every step of the excavation and the transfer of the human remains suggests to me that the representative (and by extension the Hirmer Group) sought to nip any accusations of inappropriateness or lack of professionalism in the bud. At the same time, the reliance of Mr. Meier-Scupin (and the Hirmer Group) on expert advice, and the involvement of all relevant institutions in Munich (specifically the memorial site Dachau and the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism) further builds on, confirms and cements their Deutungshoheit. Arguably, the builder and property owner have fulfilled their obligation with respect to the history of the site, and all possible concerns have been addressed. Furthermore, by aligning with experts and institutions, a cohesion with respect to the treatment of the human remains is established which effectively forecloses any criticism or query.

Building on Foucault's and Bacchi's concepts of 'problematization,' I seek to challenge the *Deutungshoheit* as it is established with respect to developments around the site of the former subcamp complex Allach.[249] Problematization can serve as a strategy to disrupt commonly accepted knowledge, and instead to explore how an issue is "questioned, analyzed, classified, and regulated."[250] While the term 'problematization' does not have a specific singular meaning among scholars, in the context of this work, I use the concept as a form of critical analysis, in order to dismantle the processes through which a specific issue is 'framed,'[251] specifically with respect to Smith's concept of Authorized Heritage Discourse and *Deutungshoheit*. Governments, with their multiple affiliated agencies and groups, such as academics, professionals and experts contribute to societal administration through knowledge production.[252] In the case of the struggle over the interpretation of history and memory of the former Allach site, a specific narrative emerges which is directly informed by specific 'truths' which were established through experts: first, the human remains which were found at the site were determined to be of non-Jewish heritage; they are believed to likely have been left behind after the original camp cemetery which existed here until the 1950s was dissolved; and it is believed that they likely perished after the liberation of the camp as a result of the typhus epidemic. Second, aspects of the history of the Allach camp will be incorporated into the exhibition at the Dachau memorial site (with a dedicated display of objects retrieved from the site), as well as into the already existing structure of *Kulturgeschichtspfade* of the city of Munich; third, suggestions or requests by local residents and memory activists in the Ludwigsfeld for a combination of a social meeting space and an

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[249] Michel Foucault, *Language, counter-memory, practice: selected essays and interviews (*Cornell University Press, 1980), 185–186; Carol Bacchi, "Why study Problematizations? Making Politics Visible," *Open Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 2, Iss. 1 (2012): 1-8.
[250] Bacchi, *Why study Problematizations?* 1.
[251] *Ibid*., 3.
[252] *Ibid*, 6.

exhibition space with information on the site, has been declined by the city of Munich.[253] Fourth, based on the analysis of the feasibility study, any larger memorial project at the site has been ruled out, with the remaining possibility of a smaller memorial project, yet, without the incorporation of the barracks for usage. Thus, all seemingly problematic aspects – the discovery of human remains in an area where there should not have been any remaining bodies, and the possible Jewish heritage of the victims; the invisibility of the history of the site in the wider context of the memorial culture of the city of Munich; and the absence of a dedicated effort toward commemoration – have been successfully addressed. This sense of a positive or successful closure was voiced specifically by experts, such as Dr. Schalm, who stated that

> "from our perspective, we are very glad that the feasibility study was successfully brought to a closure, because of course…such studies do not necessarily always come to a positive end, because the different interests….I am also happy that the response to the study was very positive."[254] [my translation]

Similarly, Mr. Meier-Scupin also felt that the reburial of the dead marked a positive closure of the case. However, from the perspective of the memory activists, several concerns remained, namely the lack of support from the city for a social and cultural meeting place, and the perpetual sense of being passed over and left out of significant decisions which directly impact the local quality of life of the residents in the Ludwigsfeld. Mr. Mai sums up the disconnect between the experience of the locals and the city of Munich:

> "And that was surprising, when during the event for the study, they were totally surprised that there were over 100 people, and they all said, yes, we want it this way. And the city leadership stood there and said, well, what is going on, Mr. Mai , Herr Biebl [Anton Biebl, cultural advisor of the city of Munich] asked me, why is this…and I say, this is how it is here. So, you notice that administration and politics are disconnected from the reality of life."[255] [my translation]

Katharina Schramm, drawing from Richard Wilson's work on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission which represented the past in the context of healing and documentation, notes that after the re-surfacing of memories of violence in a public arena, such memories are often stored away perhaps more securely afterwards, which "not only circumvents the issue of justice, but also robs the individual of his or her experiences by subordinating them to the objective of nation building."[256] The memory discourses surrounding the site of the former forced labour

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[253] In a subsequent conversation (March 11, 2022), Dr. Schalm emphasized that while a new cultural centre in the Ludwigsfeld will not be funded by the city of Munich, this decision does not mark an endpoint in the city's interest and engagement with the local community. The city of Munich consists of 25 districts and has a standardized procedure which assesses the feasibility based on the number of residents, and the presence of already existing cultural centres. The Ludwigsfeld is administratively associated with the district Milbertshofen, which already has two cultural centres, and thus, an additional centre in the Ludwigsfeld is not feasible. This decision was further confirmed through the independently conducted feasibility study. While the city will not fund the establishment of a new cultural centre in the Ludwigsfeld, it provides funding for cultural projects (*Kulturfoerdermittel*) for district initiatives (*Stadtteilinitiativen*), such as exhibitions and related historical projects, which are also offered and available to residents in the Ludwigsfeld.

[254] Interview Dr. Sabine Schalm, *Kulturreferat* Munich, November 14th 2018. Dr. Schalm emphasized in a subsequent conversation (March 11, 2022) that the outcome of the feasibility study was positive in that sense that all concerned stakeholders engaged and participated so that the study could be completed, which is not always the case.

[255] Interview Klaus Mai, Munich, October 11th 2018.

[256] Richard Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) in Katharina Schramm, "Introduction: Landscapes of Violence," 9.

camp Allach follow a similar pattern: first, research and dissemination is undertaken by established experts and institutions; second, after the re-surfacing of these memories in a public arena, these memories are stored away even more securely afterwards, as it happened in the removal and reburial of the skeletal human remains, as well as through the creation of specific 'truths;' third, the issue of justice is thereby effectively circumvented, and the individuals who perished on the site of the camp have been robbed of their individuality by subordinating them to the nationalized memory of the Holocaust. While the work and commitment of non-academic researchers, such as Klaus Mai, is acknowledged and appreciated, this knowledge will be incorporated into already established historical discourses, which a focus on overarching issues, such as the system of forced labour and subcamps, or the exploitation of forced labourers in more general terms, however, at the expense of the individual victim.

As I began my data analysis after the completion of my research visit, I struggled to find a clearly identifiable entry point to the topic. This sense of confusion was further enhanced by a casual comment made on the side: "we all know that these were bad places, and that people died. What else is there to say?"[257] Yet, any doubts I might have had about the existence of a 'problem' (according to several experts, there was none) and the importance of the events at the site were quickly extinguished as I began to present parts of my findings at conferences in Canada and the USA. While forced labour in camps in the East, such as at Auschwitz-Birkenau, is well-known, the topic of forced labour and associated sites in Germany is still relatively new to the North American academic community. The existence of such a site in a suburb of Munich – particularly in view of Germany's internationally praised nationalized commemoration of the Holocaust – usually came as a surprise. The issue which received the greatest attention, however, was the findings and exhumation of human skeletal remains, and the subsequent decisions about the individuals' cultural and religious heritage.

In a perhaps serendipitous circle, my own navigation through the complex discourses of the former forced labour camp Allach, which began with a press article about a potential mass grave on the site, led me to the unexpected encounter with a survivor of the camp: on the occasion of the conference "The Future of Holocaust Memory in Richmond," Virginia, in September 2019, I had the great pleasure to meet Professor Gabriel Finder from the University of Virginia. Professor Finder took a particular interest in my presentation, and I was soon to discover that his father, Herbert Finder, had been a prisoner in the Allach subcamp complex at the age of 15. Professor Finder generously introduced me to his father via email, and I had the opportunity to speak to Mr. Finder about his experiences by telephone. Nothing suggested that Mr. Finder at this point had reached the respectable age of 90 years. The information Mr. Finder shared with me was very similar to the information which he had provided during an oral history interview in 1987 which was conducted by the Gratz College Holocaust Oral History Archive. Born in 1929 in Vienna to an orthodox Jewish father originally from Poland, and a German-born Jewish mother, Herbert left Austria with his parents in 1938, and was eventually deported with his father via France to Poland. In 1943, he was in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943, from where father and son were sent to Warsaw, where both fell in will typhus. By July 1944, Herbert and his father were sent to Dachau, from where initially only Herbert was sent to the forced labour camp Allach,

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[257] As this comment was made off record, and in a casual setting, the individual did not provide their consent to publish this statement. I therefore do not provide their name, affiliation, or the occasion during which this remark was made. However, the sentiment expressed in this statement is reflective of the pragmatism which was occasionally revealed by different interviewees with respect to the dark history of the Third Reich and specifically its related historical sites.

where he was joined again by his father on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. They were both placed into the construction commandos working on the bunker. Herbert recalled that other prisoners died from starvation and exhaustion. He also notes specifically that between fall of 1944 until April 1945, western and Polish Jews were a minority in the camp, whereas the majority were Hungarian Jews, some of whom were 16 years old. During the last week of April 1945, Herbert and his father were forced onto one of the death marches which left the Allach camp, where they eventually were liberated by American soldiers. By the time Herbert and his father came to the US in 1947, he was 17 years old.[258] While I had read numerous testimonies by former prisoners of the Allach subcamp complex which clearly illustrate the treatment the inmates were subjected to, Mr. Finder's own story offers a particularly personal glimpse into the trajectory of the life of a young Jewish boy who was sent to the Allach site for the singular purpose to exploit him for the construction work of the BMW bunker – his survival was irrelevant to both the guards of the camp as well as the corporation BMW. Mr. Finder's statement furthermore points to the number of children overall, who were sent to Allach for the purpose of hard labour. The total number of children who were incarcerated in the Allach camp is unknown, and in the existing body of research, these children have been notably absent, with the exception of Mai's work. While it has been established that specifically the treatment of the Jewish 'less-than-slave" labourers was without doubt inhumane, the exploitation of children as young as Mr. Finder who was 15 years old when he entered the Allach camp, is notable particularly with the continued silence with respect to this topic in existing research publications on the camp, as well as in existing exhibitions which refer to the site, such as at the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau and the BMW museum.

Mr. Finder's story, and by extension the story of the children who were incarcerated at the Allach subcamp complex, exemplifies Wilson's theory that individual experiences are written out of national and official narratives: as the focus of the debate between the memory activists, the city of Munich, the memorial site Dachau, the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism, and the corporation BMW centres on the size, format, location and feasibility of a potential memorial project, costs, and *Deutungshoheit*, little consideration has so far been given to the individual experiences of different prisoner groups in the camp complex. This, however, in my interpretation is arguably the most significant aspect of the site's history: the importance of the site cannot be grasped by interested persons if the narrative focuses only on broad aspects of the camp, such as the overall number of foreign and forced prisoners, the output of production, or damages to the production sites through aerial bombings. As I have illustrated in chapter 3, the experiences of different groups of prisoners were vastly diverse, and the true inhuman nature of the camp and the system of forced labour and 'extermination through labour' cannot be gleaned from propaganda photographs or prisoner numbers.

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[258] Telephone conversation with Mr. Herbert Finder, December 3rd, 2019; "Oral history interview with Herbert Finder," *USHMM archive,* Accession Number 1997.A.0441.35, RG Number RG-50.462.0035, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn508655 Accessed January 5, 2020.

CHAPTER 3. The Allach subcamp complex

(My fieldnotes, Ludwigsfeld, October 2018): When I visited the site of the former forced labour camp Allach – today the Ludwigsfeld – for the first time, I was surprised by the unique little setting I encountered. Although I had gathered the impression of a small community somewhat set-back from other surrounding suburbs from my previous research, I had not quite expected the lush,serene atmosphere so close to the bustling metropolis Munich. After a 20-minute bus ride from the train station Dachau, which took us through Dachau's industrial area, across agricultural fields and meadows, and finally the town of Karlsfeld, the bus took a left turn, and entered the small post-war era settlement of Ludwigsfeld. The usage of names for villages vis-à-vis the names of segments of the former camp complex in itself is notable: while the subcamp complex was named 'Allach', it was actually situated between the village of Karlsfeld to the north and the town of Allach to the south, and not in Allach. In addition, two residential areas of the subcamp Allach were named 'Ludwigsfeld' – although this did not refer to the actual village Ludwigsfeld - and 'Karlsfeld,' while the so-called 'Jewish camp' was named 'OT Lager Karlsfeld.' This overlap of actual geographical locations versus sites of the historical camp may have contributed to at times unclear and contradicting information about the site.

It was a sunny, warm day in early October 2018 when I got off the bus at the Siedlung Ludwigsfeld stop. After the bus had left, I stood at a bus shelter at the small intersection of Karlsfelder Strasse and Achatstrasse and took in the setting. To my left were agricultural fields, while to my right I could see glimpses of the MAN Teststrecke – a test range for trucks for the company MAN. Across the street from the bus shelter I could see the small Erzengel Michael Kirche (archangel Michael chapel), and the neat post-war two- and three-story houses of the settlement Ludwigsfeld. I began to walk along Achatstrasse, thereby entering the Ludwigsfeld, and for a while wandered aimlessly around the tiny settlement, following the narrow, curved roads with streets named after gemstones: Smaragdstrasse, Opalstrasse, Kristallstrasse, Rubinstrasse, Diamantstrasse (emerald street, opal street, crystal street, ruby street, diamond street). I looked for a café where I might be able to sit and collect my thoughts, but the tiny setting clearly consisted exclusively of residential housing and a few small businesses, such as a deli, a beverage store, a few social agencies such as a kindergarten, and of an effusive number of religious buildings. The majority of buildings are multi-family two-or three stories buildings with terracotta brick roofs, painted in soft pastel colors and divided by ample green spaces with lush trees and bushes, surrounded by open fields. The setting is domestic and peaceful, with laundry stands between the buildings, and tall rustling trees, whose falling

leaves covered the sidewalks. The settlement is remarkably small and has the distinct atmosphere of a self-contained community. The entire area is quaint and has an unexpectedly rural feel and village character – specifically in consideration of the close proximity to the sprawling city of Munich.

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Figure 3

Toward the eastern periphery of the settlement are a handful of somewhat newer multi-family homes. Located beyond these buildings, surrounded by small patches of grass and trees, I finally see the remaining former barracks. I sit down on a low wooden barrier which divides the greenspace surrounding the homes from a small path, facing the barracks. After the innocuous and homey atmosphere of the settlement, the austere building with its aura of neglect strikes me as out of place. The one-story building with its flat roof is painted in a washed-out yellow, the walls are streaked by rain and grime, and in some areas are defaced by graffiti. Along the west-facing wall of the barracks, two black memorial plaques – in French and German - are mounted, which reference the former subcamp and armament production. Beneath the plaques is a small concrete ledge on which visitors have left pebbles, as well as a candle, and slightly to the right sits a modest evergreen potted plant. I walk slowly around the barracks, crossing the freshly cut grass, and move toward a small wood, now vibrant with fall colours.

[259] Street in Ludwigsfeld, my own photograph, fall 2018.
[260] Street in Ludwigsfeld, with permission by Gerlinde Dunzinger, fall 2018.

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Figure 4

I pursue a small footpath into the overgrown shrubs and trees, making my way first to the south of the barracks, then turning east. To my right, I can see glimpses of the open fields between the trees, while to my left, a mesh wire fence hinders further access. At odd intervals, I encounter concrete pillars which support the fence, as well as tall lights which appear to be no longer operational, and I muse whether these structures stem from the time of the camp's operation or the post-war era. I estimate that this heavily overgrown wooded area must be the former 'women's camp' which had been fenced off the OT Lager Karlsfeld. I continue along the narrow footpath, until the trees give way to wide open fields. I turn north, following the fence line along a dirt path. To my left, the mesh wire continues. Here, beyond the fence, a vast area of barren rocky ground is visible, dispersed with piles of unremarkable rocks and dirt and trenches. I stand quietly and as I gaze through the mesh wire fence at the empty space, I try to connect the black-and-white archival photographs I have seen from the camp with the desolate rubble field in front of me. The warm breeze, carrying the pungent smells of rapeseed and earth and the sound of children's laughter in the far distance draw me back into the present, and, immersed in this homely and utterly mundane setting, it is difficult to imagine, that the terror of this former camp and the suffering of its inmates existed within similar smells and sounds.

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[261] Single remaining barracks of former subcamp complex Allach, with permission by Gerlinde Dunzinger, fall 2018.
[262] Memorial plaques on barracks, my own photograph, fall 2018.

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Figure 5

To explore the history of the Ludwigsfeld and the former forced labour camp Allach, spanning 75 years, and to create a coherent chronology is not dissimilar to seeking to learn more about the past through an archaeological excavation: it entails determining the specific area where the excavation will take place and establishing parameters; carefully sifting through material to establish important clues from irrelevant matter; examining and separating layers of potentially confusing, overlapping timelines and events, and finally drawing conclusions based on established facts while seeking to fill the gaps based on fragments of information. From a purely historical perspective, the chronology and events of the satellite camp complex Allach could be considered as a distinct period which existed in the context of the Third Reich. Yet, the continuities of the site in terms of its materiality, usage and separation from surrounding communities, as well as its residents, have created a living palimpsest in which the past and present are deeply and inseparably intertwined. The unique social structure of the contemporary Ludwigsfeld is directly linked to the specific composition of residents during the time of the camp's operation as well as during the first two decades after the war. Furthermore, the material structure of the settlement is linked to the layout and usage of different areas of the former subcamp complex. As the the Allach concentration camp and the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld are closely connected with the history and the evolution of the corporation BMW, I will also expand on the company's changes and developments as they relate to the site, particularly during the era of the Second World War and the years after the liberation of the camp.

1. The beginnings of a palimpsest

The history of the camp and its evolution over the course of its operation are highly complex, and information provided in primary and secondary sources does not always align, which can be in part ascribed to a lack of records, so far un- or underexplored archives, as well as to the source implicated in the production of the record. With respect to the last point, it can arguably be suggested that the historical narrative writing of the Allach camp complex provides an excellent case study in the creation of historical narratives in that, for example, there is considerable disagreement between researchers about which specific subcamps and locations should be included into the overarching Allach subcamp complex and which groups of prisoners should be

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[263] The area of the former OT camp Karlsfeld after excavations, my own photograph, fall 2018.
[264] Ludwigsfeld, with permission by Gerlinde Dunzinger, fall 2018.

noted.[265] The blurry history of the Allach subcamp complex provides a particular (and, at times, frustrating) challenge for any researcher seeking to establish an indisputable 'truth.' Yet it is, in my interpretation, precisely the conflicting information as well as the at times astonishing gaps in the record that point to the complexity – and limitations - of historical research in more general terms, providing an intriguing example on the inseparable dynamics of remembering and forgetting. After all, the past is always subject to perspectives and interpretations, and depends as much on surviving, available, and accessible sources at certain points in time, as on the specific approaches, purposes, and available resources of the researcher, and finally on current local, national and international interests and agendas of various parties and stakeholders.

The history of the Allach subcamp complex, such as it is available in documents, audiotaped testimonies and images, has been recorded from a variety of vastly different perspectives for very diverse purposes, such as by the perpetrators – whether in the form of former SS operational and administrative staff, camp administrators, corporate records – liberators, bystanders, and of course, the victims. Many of these sources are, by implication, limited in that, for example, perpetrators during the post-war era sought to present themselves in a favourable light to avoid persecution; at the same time, those who were imprisoned rarely had an objective overview of the entire camp system, and it is therefore possible that some information may not align with other sources. We can also assume that the information available in those documents that were not destroyed by the perpetrators were perhaps considered to contain the least amount of potentially damaging information and can therefore be potentially misleading. An in-depth, comprehensive analysis of the historical site would be a project in itself and is not the core purpose of the present work. For this reason, I will provide a chronology of the evolution of the camp and post-war usage as it can be outlined from established secondary sources, and, at times, from primary sources, such as testimony by survivors or local residents. The intent of this approach is to provide the setting for my subsequent discussion about discourses of memory, forgetting, and struggles over the interpretation of history.

The history of today's settlement Ludwigsfeld began prior to the history of the Allach subcamp complex and continued after the end of the Second World War. The camp complex Allach emerged as a result of decisions by the corporation BMW and underwent significant changes over the course of its operations. Various additions of related camps, which were used at different times for different purposes and prisoners over time, prevent a straight-forward chronological analysis of the site. Similarly convoluted as the material evolution of the Allach camp complex are the diverse communities of inmates, who were housed on site in different locations for vastly different purposes over time. The prisoners of the Allach camp complex fell into multiple categories, which, in turn, determined their treatment and experiences, and ultimately chances of survival, at the camp. As I began to familiarize myself with the history of the camp complex and its prisoner populations, I was often confused by the lack of clarity between categories of prisoners, which is partly due to the arbitrary and dynamic nature of the forced labour system in Nazi Germany (in which, for example, a foreign worker could become a concentration camp inmate), as well as to the constantly evolving various subcamps with changing populations. Specifically, with respect to the diverse inmate populations at the Allach

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[265] See for example: Mai, Klaus, *Verfolgung, Krieg, Flucht und Vertreibung. Dokumente, Bilder, Berichte*, 2. Ed. (Munich, 2016); Mai, Klaus, *Das vergessene KZ. Das KZ-Außenlager Dachau-Allach und das OT-Lager Allach Karlsfeld in Ludwigsfeld*, exhibition catalogue, 2. Ed. (Munich, 2015); Schalm, *Überleben durch Arbeit.*

subcamp, I soon began to realize that it was necessary to highlight and explore the differences between different groups, to illustrate how the labels assigned to prisoners as a result of Nazi racial ideology (such as 'foreign worker,' 'Eastern worker,' or 'concentration camp inmate') could themselves constitute a death sentence. One element of the history and trajectory of the Ludwigsfeld is the continuity of the social and cultural treatment of specific groups of individuals over time (e.g. forced labourers and concentration camp inmates during the time of the camp's operation, and the diverse groups in individuals who settled in the Ludwigsfeld over the subsequent decades), from the Nazi era to the present. Keeping this aspect in mind, while, at the same time seeking to untangle the web of changes in the material landscape of the site, prisoners' lived experiences, and ideological and capitalist decision-making, I will begin with an overview of the growth and dynamics of forced labour in Nazi Germany, specifically the highly diverse treatment of different categories of workers and prisoners in Nazi Germany. Subsequently, I will trace the development of the Allach subcamp complex in response to corporate and political decision-making, yet, always in relation to the impact on the prisoner populations, up until and shortly after the time of liberation. Due to the considerable complexity of the topic and the timespan I will discuss the post-war developments of the site leading up to the present in the subsequent chapter.

2. Categories of foreign and forced labourers during the Third Reich

Although previous unemployment rates in Germany fell under Nazism, the Third Reich's economy experienced labour shortages, particularly with the beginning of the Second World War, which it sought to remedy through the use of forced labour. Yet, the term 'forced labour' in Nazi Germany, as Mark Spoerer and Jochen Fleischhacker have pointed out, is not easily defined.[266] In most general terms, 'forced labour' under the Nazi regime relates specifically to the abduction and exploitation of foreign civilian workers, prisoners of war as well as concentration camp prisoners.[267] Approximately 20 million people were impacted by the forced labour system, and by 1944, 26% of the work force in Germany were foreigners.[268] Forced labour took many different forms, from agricultural and construction work, to armament production, to household help or childcare, to clearing up after air raids. It occurred in ghettos, camps, in companies, private households, on farms, and on streets. Forced labour during the Nazi era evolved over time and in response to changes during the war. And while the deployment of foreigners as workers in the German Reich was in contradiction to the racial principle of the National Socialists, which sought to protect the German "Volk" from 'contaminating' foreign influences, the perpetually increasing demand for labour eventually led to an adjustment of these principles. Nevertheless, throughout the Third Reich, the Nazi's specific racial ideology remained intact. As Donald Bloxham explains, "[f]rom the top the hierarchy was: non-Jewish Germans; non-Jews from Western Europe and the Reich; Poles, Soviet citizens, concentration

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[266] Mark Spoerer and Jochen Fleischhacker, "Forced Laborers in Nazi Germany: Categories, Numbers and Survivors," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 22, Iss. 2 (Autumn 2002): 169-204, 173.
[267] "Forced Labour 1939 – 1945," *Zwangsarbeit Archiv*, https://www.zwangsarbeit-archiv.de/en/zwangsarbeit/zwangsarbeit/zwangsarbeit-begriffe/index.html Accessed June 15, 2020.
[268] *Ibid.*; Spoerer and Fleischhacker, *Forced Laborers*, 172; note: the majority of these workers had been deported from their home countries, but the authors indicate that while some of these individuals had originally come as volunteers, they were coerced to remain in the country until the end of the war.

camp prisoners; and Jews."[269] The treatment of specific groups of forced labourers differed considerably, and the status of a workers within this system was highly fluid in that a (voluntary) foreign worker could become a concentration camp prisoner as a result of alleged disobedience or sabotage.[270] As Ulrich Herbert has established in his seminal examination of forced labour during the Third Reich, the term 'forced labour' encompasses a range of groups which were subjected to vastly different recruitment, working and living conditions, and, ultimately, chances for survival.[271] Yet, while some markers can be used to define categories of workers, such as concentration camp prisoners or Jewish labourers, considerable overlap and lack of clarity exists between such categories as *Ostarbeiter* [Eastern worker], *Fremdarbeiter* [foreign civilian worker], and the commonly used term 'forced labourer,' which can relate to a wide range of experiences. Herbert uses the four categories above to differentiate between groups of workers, including *Fremdarbeiter*, *Ostarbeiter*, Prisoner of War (PoW) and Jewish worker. Spoerer and Fleischhacker, on the other hand, point to the significant differences between *Fremdarbeiter*, based on their country of origin, ethnic and work status. Building on Albert Hirschmann's and Benjamin Ferencz's work, the authors instead suggest that four criteria related to the conditions of life and work can be applied to determine the status of a worker in Nazi Germany, one of which relates to the probability of surviving in comparison to that of a regular worker, they and propose the following differentiations of foreign labour: privileged, forced, slave, and less-than-slave.[272] Drawing on both Herbert, as well as Spoerer and Fleischhacker, the following broad categories of workers can be identified in Nazi Germany, though mobility between some groups prevents a definite, consistent definition: *Fremdarbeiter* [foreign civilian workers], which fall into the categories of 'privileged', and 'non-privileged,' based on their country of origin, ethnic, and work status; *Ostarbeiter*, who are mainly identified by their country of origin; Prisoners of War - with the exception of Soviet PoWs - which, based on their country of origin, can be differentiated as 'privileged' and 'non-privileged;' concentration camp prisoners; and 'less than slaves,' which Fleischhacker and Spoerer apply to Soviet and Jewish Polish PoWs, but, which, I suggest, also applies to Jewish forced labourers, specifically under the premise of 'extermination through labour.'[273]

The term *Fremdarbeiter* [foreign civilian workers] has been applied to workers who were

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[269] Donald Bloxham, "Jewish Slave Labour and its Relationship to the 'Final Solution,'" in *Remembering for the Future* ed. J. K. Roth, E. Maxwell, M. Levy and W. Whitworth (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001), 164.

[270] Ulrich Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labour in Germany under the Third Reich* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[271] Ulrich Herbert, "Forced Laborers in the Third Reich: An Overview," in *International Labor and Working-Class History*, Vol. 58, Wartime Economies and the Mobilization of Labor (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 192-218.

[272] Spoerer and Fleischhacker, *Forced Laborers in Nazi Germany*, 176: "The use of the term slave labor should definitely not be extended to inmate groups or to Soviet and Jewish Polish POWS […] the typical slaveholder has an economic interest in the lives of his slaves. The SS, as the inmates' slaveholder, leased them to firms and other employers. Although higher ss authorities emphasized the economic value of the inmates, especially after1942, the ss camp guards, most of whom were primitive men and women, often drove the inmates to exhaustion and death. To call the most ill-treated foreign laborers slaves is almost euphemistic; Soviet and Jewish Polish POWS were less-than-slave laborers." Benjamin Ferencz, *Less than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979); Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States (*Cambridge, Mass., 1970).

[273] Spoerer and Fleischhacker, *Forced Laborers in Nazi Germany*, 176. Note: the concept 'extermination through labour" was a component of the Nazi's 'final solution,' that is, the genocide of the European Jews. During the Wannsee conference in January 1942, it was stated that Jews were to be allocated for labour in the East, "[…]in the course of which action doubtless a large portion will be eliminated by natural causes," including working conditions, physically demanding work, excessive work hours, minimal nutrition, lack of hygiene and proper medical care, insufficient clothing, as well as torture and abuse; See also: "Wannsee Protocol January 20, 1942, Translation," *Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archives*, http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu/news/uploads/WanseeProtocols.pdf Accessed January 5, 2021.

actively recruited in allied countries as well as territories in western and northern Europe that Germany had occupied; workers from these countries would have had certain privileges, depending on their country of origin and ethnic status. These individuals came initially to Germany voluntarily, based on the promise of paid work at a wage similar to that of German workers, and originated from Germany's allies or neutral countries, mainly France, Italy, and Spain, but also Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary.[274] However, with the increasing need for skilled workers, these individuals, who had come to work in Germany for a set period of time, were eventually not allowed to return to their home countries, whereby they fell into the category of 'forced labourer.'

The term *Fremdarbeiter* has also been used, for example by Herbert, for Polish civilians, who, by early 1940, were forcibly brought to Germany through drafts, raids, and roundups. Due to the racial perception of the Poles by the Nazis, these workers suffered under specific restrictions and regulations, including low wages, and thereby had no privileges.[275] Yet, already by May 1940, this form of recruitment was no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the German economy, and over one million French prisoners of war were subsequently brought into the Reich as workers. While those early groups of forced workers very initially mainly used in agriculture, with the changes at the front after autumn 1941, the need for labourers increased further. Moving toward the strategy of "total war," the German armament industry began to increase production, in view of their anticipation of a lengthier war.[276]

Kriegsgefangene or Prisoners of War (PoWs) were another category of workers used in the Third Reich's economy. By late 1940, already 1.5 million PoWs, mainly from Poland, France, England and the Netherlands, were deployed as cheap labour. While the PoWs of Western and Northern European countries were treated with a degree of civility, Eastern European PoWs were exposed to ruthless brutality. During the winter of 1941/42, of the approximately 5.7 million Soviet Prisoners of War which were in German hands, it is estimated that 3.3 million perished in German captivity. While Nazi leadership initially rejected the idea of deploying Soviet civilians and prisoners of war for work for the German Reich, by November 1941, in response to the increasing need for labourers for armament manufacturing, Soviet PoWs were increasingly deployed within the boundaries of the German Reich.[277] By the fall of 1944, approximately 2.8 million Soviet civilians and PoWs were used for forced labour in the German war economy, the largest group of foreign workers.

Ostarbeiter or Eastern workers were Soviet or Polish civilian workers, who were brought to Germany forcibly through raids, roundups and drafts, and were incarcerated in camps, where they were forced to live under deplorable conditions. In alignment with the racial concepts of the Third Reich, this group were subjected to significantly worse conditions than workers from western or northern European countries and endured/faced severe restrictions, small rations, grueling work, and particularly ruthless use of force. Within a short period of time of living under such conditions, the output of these workers was only 37% in comparison to German counterparts.[278] By the end of 1942, over 1.7 million Soviet civilian labourers and prisoners of war worked for German companies, mainly in industry, and a new system of camps were created to house these workers. Yet, by the beginning of 1944, even these substantial groups of foreign

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[274] Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*; Herbert, *Forced Labourers in the Third Reich*.
[275] *Ibid*., 193.
[276] *Ibid*., 194.
[277] Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*.
[278] Ibid., 198.

workers did not meet the needs of German industry, which began to use concentration camp workers in armament factories.

KZ-Haeftlinge or concentration camp inmates were used for forced labour from 1933 onward, with the opening of the first concentration camp Dachau. Until the beginning of the Second World War, these prisoners were German Jews, Communists, Socialists, and Liberals, and hard labour was used as a means to demoralize and 're-educate' prisoners, and often involved meaningless, strenuous, repetitive tasks under brutal conditions. With the preparation for war and increasing conscription of German workers, the work of concentration camp prisoners became increasingly economically productive, for example, in the quarries in Buchenwald and Mauthausen.

Deutsche Juedische KZ-Haeftlinge or German Jewish concentration camp inmates were used for forced labour from 1933 onward, and foreign Jews were drafted for labour beginning with the invasion of Poland in September 1939. The use of Jews for forced labour was a marked by "antisemitism, pragmatism and economic empire-building,"[279] and the treatment of Jewish forced workers was particularly brutal as it operated under the premise of 'extermination through labour.' Jewish prisoners in ghettos or concentration camps were forced to work in various capacities for SS-owned enterprises, private German companies, such as *IG-Farben* at Auschwitz-Birkenau, as well as for armament production. By the summer of 1943, only very few Jews had remained in Germany whereby Hitler's demand for a 'Jew-free' Germany had been achieved, and deployment of Jews back into the German Reich was not permitted. With the increased aerial bombings of the German industry, however, Hitler decided in April 1944 to use Jews for labour. With the specific purpose to be either deployed in armament manufacturing, in the construction of underground production sites or large bunkers to protect essential production buildings, a number of Hungarian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau were assigned to concentration camps in the Reich and subsequently distributed among companies who had requested concentration camp workers.[280] While the working and living conditions of these labourers differed significantly between companies,

> "[i]n general one can, with all due caution, assume that those who were themselves involved in the production of armaments had greater chances of survival than those prisoners who were deployed in the large construction projects, particularly in the construction of underground production facilities."[281]

Finally, a specific form of forced labour was for the *Organisation Todt* (OT). The OT was a Nazi era civil and military engineering group, which was named for its founder Fritz Todt, who was a senior Nazi figure and engineer. This organization oversaw a wide range of construction and engineering projects in Germany as well as occupied Europe and became notorious for its ruthless exploitation of forced labour. While the OT was in operation from 1933 onward, it considerably increased its projects from 1943 on under Albert Speer in his role as Minister of Armaments and Munitions. The OT was incorporated into Speer's ministry, and began to construct air-raid shelters, bombed-out buildings, and most significantly underground refineries and armaments factories. From 1942 until the end of the war, the vast majority of OT labourers were PoWs and forced labourers from occupied countries. From the spring of 1944 onward, Hitler had ordered

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[279] Bloxham, *Jewish Slave Labour and its Relationship to the 'Final Solution*, 164.
[280] Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*, 205; Edward Homze, *Foreign Labor in Nazi Germany* (Princeton University Press, 1967); Eugen Kogon, *The Theory and Practice of Hell: The German Concentration Camps and the System Behind Them* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006); Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (Penguin Books, 2009).
[281] Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*, 205.

the deployment of 100,000 Jews from Eastern European countries, such as Hungary and Romania, to Germany to work as "less-than-slaves" on bunker construction projects.[282] The first Hungarian Jews arrived in main camp Dachau on June 18th 1944.[283]

The significance of foreign labour for the Third Reich economy cannot be over-emphasized. Without the deployment of millions of foreign workers, Germany's agricultural and industrial production would have collapsed, according to Herbert, at the latest in 1942. However, the actual numbers of foreign workers, PoWs, and concentration camp inmates who were exploited are extremely difficult to estimate, not only because of destroyed records, but also because of the structure of the system itself, in which, for example, a foreign worker could become a concentration camp inmate. Estimates of the SS Main Office for Economy and Administration suggest that around 240,000 concentration camp inmates were used in the armament manufacturing in underground plants and in the construction sites of the OT, while another 230,000 prisoners were used in private industry.[284] It has been established that at least 2,000 German companies used some form of forced labour, and that specifically large firms relied on and requested concentration camp inmates and Jewish forced labourers as inexpensive workers. Herbert states that

> "the initiative for the use of forced workers of all categories always derived from the firm; if they did not ask for forced workers, they received none. Presumptions that the firms had been forced by the regime into using forced workers are groundless and fail to recognize the character of the cooperative structure in the German labour administration during the war."[285]

Furthermore, because conditions between workplaces differed significantly, depending on the company and the camp in which the worker was housed, it can be concluded, that

> "individual firms were granted considerable discretion and leeway for action. The poor working conditions of workers from the Soviet Union can therefore not be explained solely on the basis of binding regulations set down by the authorities."[286]

Former forced labourers were denied compensation until 1999. In order to facilitate the recovery and growth of the German economy after the war, specific categories of victims of the Nazi regime were excluded from compensation, particularly groups with little political pressure. The German government thereby avoided compensation payments to former forced labourers.[287] The subsequent examination of the development of the subcamp complex Allach and its diverse populations will contain references to some, if not all of these categories of workers.

3. The expansion of BMW's production of airplane engines and its workforce

The name Ludwigsfeld, the post-war settlement on the site of the former forced labour camp Allach, stems from the small village which existed since 1802. This hamlet, which was occupied by 117 residents in 1820, was one of a group of similar villages which were located along the road leading from the city of Munich to the town of Dachau. It was named by the latter Bavarian king Max Josef I. after his son Ludwig. By 1928, this village had expanded to 42 individual

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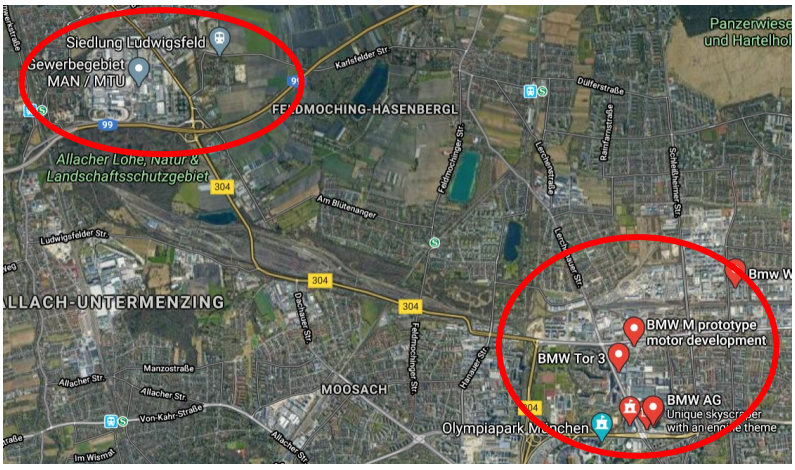
[282] Ferencz, "Less than slaves."
[283] Schalm, *Ueberleben durch Arbeit*.
[284] Herbert, *Forced Laborers in the Third Reich*, 206.
[285] *Ibid*., 206.
[286] *Ibid*., 198.
[287] Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*.

houses, occupied by 248 residents. In 1933, with the seizure of power by the National Socialists, several of the smaller communities – such as *Milbertshofen* and *Moosach* - became incorporated into the into the city of Munich. Milbertshofen was the location of the main plant of the corporation *Bayerische Motorenwerke GmbH* [Bavarian engine plant], founded in 1917. BMW emerged from the former *Rapp Motorenwerke GmbH*, which was an aircraft engine manufacturer. By the end of the First World War, BMW ceased the production of aircraft engines and instead produced railway brakes as well as small motors. By 1922, now BMW AG (*Aktiengesellschaft* = corporation), BMW's main plant in Milbertshofen generated a variety of vehicle engines and eventually returned to the production of aircraft engines. In 1928, BMW acquired the *Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach AG* in Thuringia, a former car producer, and this site was named BMW factory Eisenach, producing the first BMW cars. With the increasing armament production in preparation for war, large orders soon pushed BMW to its limits.

Already in 1936, the *Reichsluftfahrministerium* [German ministry of aviation] urged for an expansion of the production sites in Milbertshofen and Eisenach. In conjunction with this development, BMW founded the *Flugmotorenfabrik Allach GmbH*, about 9 kilometres north-west of its main plant, and, after several delays, in September 1939, the expansion began to take shape, although the final size of this plant was not estimated at this point.[288] The Allach location was chosen for a variety of reasons, mainly its proximity to the plant in Milbertshofen, its easily accessible and convenient location, and the potential camouflage of the Allach woods. This investment into a massive production area enabled BMW to take on new large contracts, thereby becoming an indispensable collaborator with the new regime. Production of 801 aircraft engines began at the main plant Milbertshofen by October 1941, and in Allach in May 1942, with a total monthly output of 350 engines a month by spring 1941 to 1,000 by the fall of 1941.[289]



This, naturally, required an increase in workforce, which expanded from 615 workers in 1938 to 1,184 in 1940, 5,572 by 1941, and 9,249 in 1942. Due to the significance of BMW for the armament production, conscripted Wehrmacht soldiers were initially sent as replacement personnel to fulfill the contracts. Yet, as more workers were needed for the German economy, and corporations – in accordance with Reich ministries – began to accept forced labor from foreign

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[288] Mai, Klaus, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach in München Ludwigsfeld*, special print 71st anniversary of the liberation of the subcamp complex Dachauo-Allach on April 30th 1945 (Munich, 2016).
[289] Benz and Distel, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945*; Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach.*

workers, PoWs, and eventually concentration camp inmates. In order to meet the ever-increasing demands for workers, BMW pursued different strategies to acquire labourers, via active recruitment as well as through registration with the Labour Office. As a result, a first deployment of 506 foreign workers arrived in Munich to work the main plant in Milbertshofen in late 1940 which over the course of 6 months increased to 1,958 foreign labourers.[290] These foreign workers were mainly Belgians, French, Dutch, Italians as well as Poles and Ukrainians.[291] Based on the previous discussion of the different treatment of Western European foreign and Eastern, specifically Polish workers, we can assume that the Belgian, French, Dutch and Italian workers received a comparatively much better treatment than their Eastern European counterparts.

German corporations such as BMW not only initiated the use of forced workers, but also had considerable freedom with respect to their treatment of the workforce. The evolution in the deployment of different groups of foreign and forced labourers by BMW as well as their working and living conditions therefore have to be considered as a purposeful corporate decision by the company, rather than an inevitable response to economic and political circumstances. As Herbert has pointed out, German corporations were in charge off the living and work environment of workers, and Werner illustrated specifically that BMW management was well aware of the key role of living arrangements in relation to the willingness to perform of forced labourers.[292] The lodging and provision of this ever-increasing workforce soon became and continued to be a major problem for BMW. The result was the development of an assemblage of different barrack camps around the BMW main plant Milbertshofen. While BMW created these specific residential camps for its workers, they were quickly filled to full capacity, and the company soon had to lease numerous school and brewery buildings, as well as guest houses.[293]

BMW soon added two new residential settlements for west European foreign workers near the Allach plant: the *Wohnsiedlungen*[294] Karlsfeld and Ludwigsfeld. The *Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld was constructed in 1940 or 1941 to the east of the Dachauer Strasse, and the *Wohnsiedlung* Karlsfeld was added over the course of 1942 to the south-west of the BMW plant. Differing capacities are provided for these two camps: for instance, Mai lists 3,500 residents for the Karlsfeld camp and 1,500 residents for the Ludwigsfeld camp, while Werner references a capacity of 3,000 residents for the Karlsfeld camp, and 3,000 for the Ludwigsfeld camp.[295] As these camps were intended to be occupied by west European workers, they were comparatively comfortable, and included sanitary installations, central heating, administrative buildings, a canteen, a hospital and a dental clinic. A social report from the company notes that great attention was paid to the health of the workers, with dedicated clinics with modern equipment existed in the plants, and furthermore, special accidental aid stations.[296] (BMW provided specifically for its German employees remarkable benefits: another social report notes that BMW offered payments for its workers in case of illness of the employee as well as their family, death, births, and to send children in need of rest on a holiday. The company offered recreation homes for workers in need of

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[290] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 179.
[291] *Ibid*., 179.
[292] *Ibid*., 227.
[293] *Ibid*., 228.
[294] Residential areas are alternatingly referred to as *Wohnsiedlung* (residential settlement area) or *Wohnlager* (residential camp).
[295] "*KZ Dachau-Allach – Planung, Bau und Produktion*," Klaus Mai KZ-Dachau-Allach, https://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?BMW-Lager_in_Allach_1943 Accessed June 3, 2002; Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 227.
[296] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, U.1.1.6.0 *Sozialbericht*, 26.

rest and provided free provisions for apprentices and youth under the age of 18.)[297] In the residential camps [*Wohnlager*] Karlsfeld and Ludwigsfeld, the residents were separated by gender and nationality, and although the residents had certain privileges and freedoms, the barracks were surrounded by a fence and guarded.[298]


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Figure 6


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[297] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, U.1.1.6.0 *Sozialbericht*, 39.
[298] "*BMW-Wohnsiedlung Karlsfeld*," *Geschichtswerkstatt* Dachau, https://www.geschichtswerkstatt-dachau.de/files/artikel/docs/102-Karlsfeld_-_BMW-Wohnsiedlung.pdf Accessed June, 2020.
[299] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-351-1 *Wohnlager* for foreign workers in Allach, 1943.
[300] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-518-4: View of the BMW *Wohnsiedlung* on the Allach plant area.
[301] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-2146-2 Foreign workers in their lodging in Allach 1942.
[302] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-7556-3 Czech forced laborers in in their room 1942.


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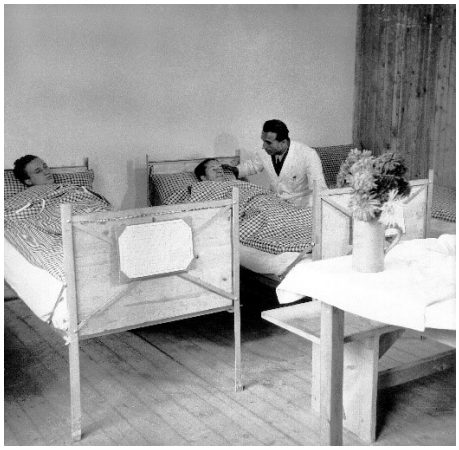
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Figure 7

Perhaps one of the most remarkable and noteworthy social facility by BMW was their very own *Kindergarten*. Mainly from an economic motivation, from 1940 onward, the BMW plant Munich (Milbertshofen) offered a *crèche* under the supervision of a doctor – this, of course, was a provision only for German mothers. As increasingly larger numbers of women were employed as workers – due to the military service of the male workers – the provision of childcare for infants and toddlers allowed mothers to work in the production plant. Mothers were allowed to nurse their children during their work hours, in view of the higher mortality rate of infants who were nursed for shorter periods of time. This crèche was one of the first of its kind in a German corporation. It is noteworthy particularly in view of the horrific treatment other categories of workers, women, and their children.[307]

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[303] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-2136-1 Allach canteen 1942.
[304] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-1800-1 Washroom in the Allach camp 1944.
[305] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-2337-1 Italian foreign workers in front of a small kiosk with a sign in Italian 1941.
[306] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-2209-1 Likely in the health facility in the Allach plant: two patients lie in beds beside each other, a doctor sits next to the bed 1941.
[307] Claudia Brunner, *Arbeitslosigkeit im NS-Staat: Das Beispiel Muenchen* (Centaurus Verlag & Media, 1997), 314.


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Figure 8

Due to continued labour shortages, and in view of the ongoing problem to house the expanding workforce, first concentration camp prisoners were sent to the site which would soon become the Allach concentration camp by March 1942 but returned at the end of the day to the main camp Dachau. Different researchers have indicated contrasting dates for the beginning of the construction of the Allach subcamp, which may be related to the diverse sites at which various groups of prisoners were housed over time. For example, while there is consensus regarding the first deployment of concentration camp prisoners to the Allach site by March 1942, Benz states that it was only in March 1943, that inmates had to construct the subcamp in close proximity to the production site. The same date is also indicated by Dr. Sabine Schalm while Klaus Mai names November 1942 as the time at which construction of the camp began.[310] Allach camp commandant *SS-Untersturmfuehrer* Josef Jarolin states that the Allach concentration camp was opened in February of 1943, while other sources point to March 19th 1943. At this point, the camp's basic infrastructure was at least to a certain extent in place, and while some concentration camp prisoners continued to be occupied with the construction of this site, by April 12th 1943, other prisoners were trained at the BMW plant to perform as milling cutters, lathe operators, drillers and in other skilled occupations.[311]

In the Allach concentration camp, the prisoners were housed in primitive wooden barracks, or so-called horse stables, similar to the wooden barracks of Auschwitz-Birkenau.[312] The prisoner population at this point consisted of inmates from other concentration camps, such as Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen and Natzweiler, and other nationalities, such as French, Italians and Russians (these individuals could have been former foreign labourers, forced labourers or PoWs). Mai notes that by October 1943, 6,929 concentration camp prisoners, forced labourers, and members of the SS, who were incarcerated for infractions, worked for the BMW plant, and by the fall of 1944, this number had increased to 17,314 concentration camp prisoners and forced

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[308] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-5204-59 Social facilities/Kindergarten Several cots in the dormitory of the kindergarten. Two nurses get the children ready for bed 1940 - 1943.
[309] Archiv BMW Group Classic, Munich, UF-2473-3 Presents for the children, Christmas 1943.
[310] Benz and Distel, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945,* 426; Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*; Schalm, *Ueberleben durch Arbeit*.
[311] Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*, 3.
[312] Schalm, *Ueberleben durch Arbeit*; Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*.

labourers.[313] An extension of the Allach camp with a hospital area as well as the OT camp Karlsfeld was planned for the fall of 1943. This construction, which was finally completed in the spring of 1944, included a hospital barracks and four additional slag stone barracks.[314]

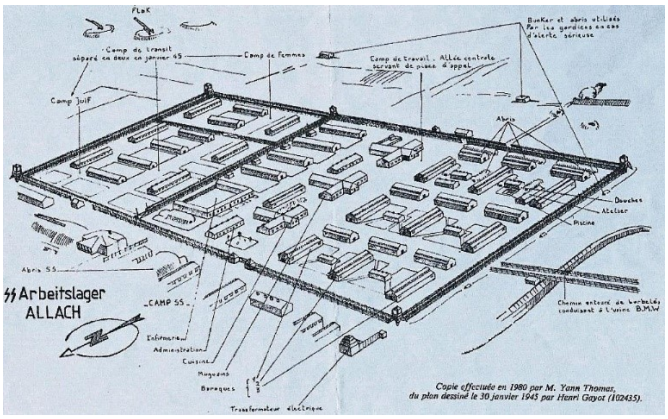

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Figure 9

Plan subcamp complex Dachau-Allach: expansion from January 1943 to April 30th 1945

Main camp Allach from February 1943

SS guard barracks from March 1943

SS sick-ward and quarantine camp expansion from May 1944

OT camp Karlsfeld from July 1944

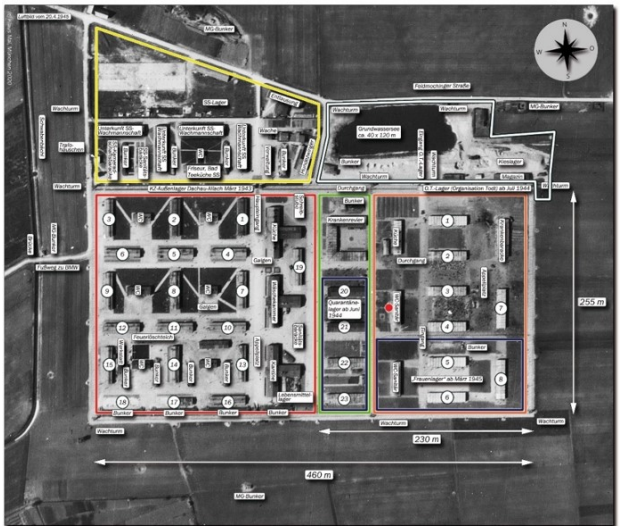

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Figure 10

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313 *Ibid.,* 8.
314 "*Das OT-Lager Allach Karlsfeld*," Klaus Mai *KZ-Dachau Allach*, http://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?Das_O.T.-Lager_Allach-Karlsfeld Accessed June 15, 2020.
315 "Lager Allach," *Comite International Dachau*, https://www.comiteinternationaldachau.com/images/countrypages/nederlands/allach/Lager_Allach_1bb.png Accessed June 3, 2020.
316 "KZ-*Aussenlagerkomplex Uebersicht*," Klaus Mai *KZ-Dachau-Allach*, http://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?KZ-Aussenlagerkomplex_Uebersicht Accessed June 1, 2020. Note: the aerial photograph with the highlighted areas are by Mr. Mai. I added the English legend.

An aerial photograph from early March 1943 captures which areas of the camp existed at this point in time: to the south-east of the BMW plant is the residential camp Karlsfeld[317] as well as the penalty camp for the SS;[318] a small camp with the name *Wuermlager* W[uerm is a nearby stream] is located to north-west of the BMW production site; on the other side of Dachauer Strasse and to the north-east of the BMW plant is the residential camp Ludwigsfeld, and just slightly below it, also along Dachauer Strasse, is the *Russenlager* [Soviet PoW camp.] Behind these two sites, further to the east, is the actual concentration camp Allach. The photograph shows that the Allach camp consisted of 18 residential and six washroom barracks, in addition to various operational buildings, such as a kitchen and canteen, a laundry facility, a prison, several air raid shelters, buildings for guards and the command office, as well as the *Appellplatz* [roll call area.] The entire site was surrounded with barbed wire and watch towers. Mai suggests the following capacities for the various camps: 1,100 prisoners for the SS penalty camp (which was located inside the periphery of the *Wohnlager* Karlsfeld); 150 occupants for the *Wuermlager*; and 6,500 prisoners for the concentration camp Allach.[319] The SS was in charge of guarding all prisoners of the Allach subcamp complex. During the early phase of the complex, these guards were mainly members of the Waffen SS of Eastern European countries, while later, recuperating soldiers of the Luftwaffe or older Wehrmacht soldiers performed guard duty. 800 SS men were stationed in total in residential barracks outside of the camp Allach.

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Figure 11

In March 1943, as a result of increasing aerial bombings, the Milbertshofen main plant suffered severe damage, and the production of the 801 engines was moved to the Allach plant in its entirety. In addition, the planning to construct a giant concrete bunker to shelter the production

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[317] Note: the residential camp Karlsfeld had a different purpose and housed a different prisoner population than the OT camp Karlsfeld.

[318] A number of special punishment camps of the SS and police (*Strafvollzugslager der SS und Polizei*) existed in the Third Reich, where members of the SS were incarcerated for a range of infractions, including homosexuality, fraternization, embezzlement, fraudulent activity etc. The *Strafvollzugslager Aussenstelle* Allach was part of the subcamp complex Allach. See Stuart Emmett, *Strafvollzugslager der SS und Polizei: Himmler's Wartime Institutions for the Detention of Waffen-SS and Polizei Criminals*, (Fonthill Media, 2017).

[319] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 227; "BMW Lager in Allach 1943," Klaus Mai KZ-Dachau-Allach, http://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?BMW-Lager_in_Allach_1943 Accessed June 1, 2020.

[320] *Ibid*.

plant were undertaken in the same month.[321] In connection with the damage to the Milbertshofen plant, and the increased production in the Allach plant, the workforce continued to expand rapidly: from 13,115 workers in 1943 to 17,313 by 1944.

By the end of 1943, the BMW production plant Allach – spanning over one million square metres, or over 247 hectares, represented one of the most modern plants in the Deutsche Reich, which included three massive production and assembly halls, administration, residential and labour camp, and prisoner barracks.

4. The construction of the bunker at the BMW Allach plant, the OT Lager Karlsfeld and Jewish concentration camp prisoners

The OT camp Karlsfeld was constructed alongside the expansion of the subcamp Allach in the spring of 1944. The appointment of the Karlsfeld camp to the *Organisation* Todt (OT) is significant in its impact on the deployment of the prisoners: these inmates were not used for the production at the BMW plant, which was performed by trained prisoners from the subcamp, but instead they were used exclusively for hard labour such as clearing and construction commandos. The main work areas of these inmates were the bunker construction site, and the railway dams in the area surrounding the station Karlsfeld.[322] The living conditions and work assignments of these construction commandos followed the principle of 'extermination through labour.' The camp consisted of a fenced-in area with watch towers, and was completely segregated from the other camp, including its own access on its northern periphery. Its purpose was to hold Jewish concentration camp prisoners. What sets the OT camp apart from the other subcamps of the Allach camp complex is its prisoner community, and the particularly brutal treatment of these inmates: with the exception of several functionary prisoners[323] from the main camp Dachau, the vast majority of its inmates were Eastern European Jews (mainly Rumanian and Hungarian) who came to the OT camp via Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Mai suggests that the construction of this camp was performed by 849 Jewish prisoners from Romania and Hungary who had been deported via Auschwitz-Birkenau and the former Warsaw ghetto, as well as prisoners from the main camp Dachau.[324] Other records indicates 700 prisoners on April 14th 1945 and camp commandant Johann Kastner reported an average of 750 prisoners.[325] The camp consisted of 12 stone barracks, two of which were used as washroom.[326] It is difficult to estimate the exact number of occupants of the OT camp due to the highly dynamic changes toward the end of the war.

In September 1943, the Reich's Ministry of Aviation approved the construction of the *Bunker* at the Allach plant, with the plant to create a 32,000 square metres hangar to protect the production.[327] The bunker, which still exists today, although it is not accessible to the public, was massive, with 2 metre strong walls, 17 metres high, 160 metres in length, and a 3.5 metre thick

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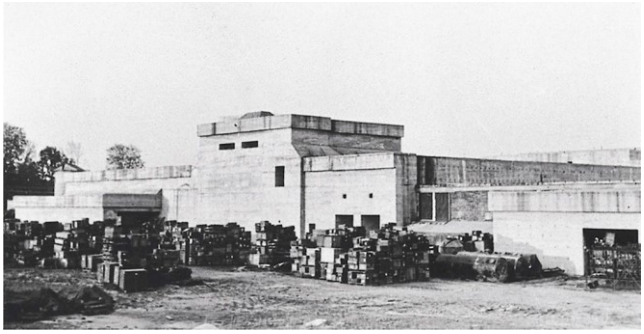
[321] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 173.
[322] For instance, prisoners of the OT camp Karlsfeld were used to clear tracks and repair for the *Reichsbahnkommando*.
[323] *Funktionshaeftlinge* or *Kapos* (functionary prisoners) were inmates in the concentration camp system, which were deployed by the SS as supervisors of the other prisoners. As long as they performed their duties accordingly, they were spared the brutal treatment and heavy labour of other inmates, and they usually received some privileges.
[324] Mai, *Das vergessene KZ,* 6.
[325] Mai, *Das vergessene KZ*, 9; "*Das OT Lager Allach-Karlsfeld*," Klaus Mai *KZ-Dachau-Allach*, http://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?Das_O.T.-Lager_Allach-Karlsfeld Accessed June 15, 2020; Benz and Distel, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945*, 356.
[326] Zedenek, "Allach – Sklaven für BMW," 71.
[327] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 176.

ceiling.[328] For this construction, enormous amounts of steel, gravel and cement needed to be brought to the site, so that a dedicated rail track was built to lead to the construction site. The prisoners worked in two 12-hour day and night shifts, carrying heavy loads of wood, iron and cement. One of the worst construction commandos was under the direction of the company *Dyckerhoff & Widman*: prisoners were treated so brutally, that in one week 58 prisoners perished as a result of injuries and beatings.[329] A survivor of the OT Lagers Karlsfeld recalled that prisoners had to carry the heavy cement bags up a slope while running. Prisoners who did not perform according to the expectations were beaten and attacked by dogs. Additionally, at times deadly accidents were the norm: a survivor testified that several workers fell into the liquid mortar as a result of a collapsed board. These prisoners suffocated in the cement, and he believes that they remained there.[330]



[331]

Figure 12

The combination of brutal and long workhours in all weathers, beatings, insufficient rations, and rapidly spreading diseases with an absence of adequate medical care constituted a death sentence for many.

The impact of this treatment – with respect to the work output – was noted in a letter from September 30th 1944 to the OT construction directing office:

> "the output of prisoners has decreased lately to such an extent that it is to be expected that our construction work will suffer considerable impedance through this decrease in work output. The main reason for this decrease in work output probably lies above all in the insufficient nourishment of these people." [332]

The document lists the nourishment which was received by the Jewish forced labourers over the course of 5 days: Tuesday, September 26th: 1 bread and cheese for 8 men; Wednesday September 27th: 1 bread and margarine for 8 men; Thursday September 28th: no bread, no other supplies; Friday September 29th: 1 bread, margarine or sausage for 2 men; Saturday September 30th: 1 bread and 100 grams of jam for 4 men. In addition to these rations, the men received soup as supper, and "[a]t noon time, these people receive the bunker soup [sic] with which you are

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[328] Mai, *Das vergessene KZ,* 16.
[329] *Ibid*.
[330] Schalm, *Ueberleben durch Arbeit*, 255.
[331] Eva von Steinburg, "*Ein ehemaliger Haefting kehrt zurueck: Zu Besuch in Muenchens KZ-Bunker: Codename "Walnuss*" 18.10.2017, *Abendzeitung Muenchen*, https://www.kz-dachau-allach.de/?BMW-Lager_in_Allach_1943 Accessed June 1, 2020.
[332] *Gedenkstaette* Dachau Archiv, Translation copy to the OT construction directing office Chief governmental construction advisor Wirth Ringeltaube, AZ vv 2531 – ½ - 44 663, accessed fall 2018.

acquainted at the building site."[333] It is noted that

> "[f]or the long working time in addition to the long marches to and from work, pay calls, etc. I consider this food ration as utterly insufficient, and this is the cause of the poor work output of these Jews on the building site."[334]

As an additional reason for the poor work output of the labourers it is suggested that the shoes and underwear may be insufficient:

> "[a] great percentage of these people have shoes in such bad condition, that they partly walk on bare ground; stockings are out of the question altogether. The underwear available to these people is mostly only what they wear on their bodies."[335]

A third reason for the reduced performance of the less-than-slaves which is omitted in this letter is the brutal treatment under which these men were forced to labour: Gabriel Rosenbaum, a survivor of the OT camp Karlsfeld, noted in his testimony that one of the victims was a fellow countryman, who was beaten to death during his shift.[336] Similarly, Marcel Riviere, also a survivor of the bunker construction commando, noted that specifically in the *Dyckerhoff*, prisoners soon perished from exhaustion from having to carry the heavy cement backs, the freezing cold with up to minus 27 degrees Celsius, from the meager ration of clear soup and 200 grams of bread a day, from beatings, accidents, or falls from high scaffolding.[337] In addition to the residential camps Ludwigsfeld and Karlsfeld, the Allach concentration camp, and the OT Lager Karlsfeld, a number of other camps existed in the area of the subcamp complex.

Another small camp, which has been named as part of the Allach subcamp complex is the transit, and later OT camp Rothschwaige. This camp was located slightly north of Karlsfeld, along the stream Wuerm. This camp was in operation by July 1942 for the specific purpose to receive forced labourers, including concentration camp prisoners, who stayed in the camp between 4 to 6 weeks, to perform health checks and delousing, prior to dispersing these workers either to the Allach subcamp complex or to other camps. Shortly after the beginning of its operations, a transport of 1,800 persons arrived in the camp, mainly from Poland and the Ukraine. Around the time of the construction of the OT camp Karlsfeld, the SS took over the transit camp, perhaps in order to support the construction of the Karlsfeld camp. From this point onward, the camp was mainly used to house Jewish concentration camp inmates from Eastern Europe, who were distributed between other camps. Similar to the OT camp Karlsfeld, it is difficult to determine precise numbers of prisoners. The Allach camp commandant Kastner stated that nobody died at the Rothschwaige camp, but Mai indicates that the prisoners' card index reveals that at least 10 Jewish prisoners were killed.

Two further small camps – the so-called *Russenlager* and the *Wuermlager* - were associated with the Allach subcamp complex, but information about the purpose of these sites, as well as their occupants is blurry and at times conflicting. Klaus Mai refers to a set of barracks to the north of the BMW plant and Werner notes a Russian Prisoner of War camp, while Mai references several

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[333] *Ibid*.
[334] *Gedenkstaette* Dachau Archiv, AZ vv 2531 – ½ - 44 663, accessed fall 2018.
[334] *Ibid*.
[335] *Ibid*.
[336] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, Aussage von Gabriel Rosenbaum, A 3424, accessed fall 2018.
[337] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, Erlebnisbericht von Marcel-G. Riviere La fin d'un camp comme les autres, o.D. 1965, StAnw Muenchen 34817, accessed fall 2018.

barracks which housed about 150 foreign workers.[338] On the other hand, Petra Roehrle notes that a Russian camp was in operation in the Rothschwaige – although not in the area of the transit camp - from July 1942 onward, which housed about 2,000 forced labourers, mainly from the Soviet Union.[339]

An additional group of forced laborers in the Allach BMW plant were members of the police and SS, who were sentenced to forced labour by their respective organizations as a result of serious offenses. Mai identifies an area in the east of the *Wohnsiedlung* Karlsfeld, right next to the area of the plant. The camp is mentioned the first time in 1943. Between 400 to 600 police and SS men were incarcerated.

5. Women in the Allach subcamp complex

While the vast majority of prisoners in the Allach subcamp complex were men, some of the forced foreign labourers were female. The experiences were clearly divided along gender lines, in that, for example, after their shift, female forced labourers went after their shift at the plant to the barracks of the French and Polish men to clean their floors. Similarly, a Ukrainian female forced labourer was used – in addition to her work at the plant – to help in household and garden for a BMW director.[340]

From late 1944 onward, as the Allach subcamp complex was increasingly used as a transit camp, and to capture concentration camp prisoners who were deported to Germany from camps further east, women were periodically housed in a portion of the OT camp Karlsfed which was fenced off. An occupancy report of the camp indicates 1,046 female Jewish prisoners on November 29th 1944, although it is possible that it is a confusion with the OT camp Rothschwaige, which had passed on several transports of female prisoners. Mai reports evidence which implies that on November 16th 1045, a transport of 404 women and 56 children from Hungary, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Slovakia and the Soviet Union arrived in the OT camp Karlsfeld, and on November 24th 1944, a transport of 461 persons left the camp for Bergen-Belsen.[341] Mai noted that another transport of 1,045 women (including 675 Jewish women and 370 Sinti and Roma) from Budapest arrived in civilian clothing on November 20th 1944.[342] On April 11th 1945, 191 Jewish women arrived in the OT camp from the camp Natzweiler. These women were not designated to work but were simply placed in the camp after the main camp Dachau could no longer accept evacuees from other camps. During the evacuation of the Allach and OT camp, 1,027 women were loaded onto railway carts, while 100 women remained in the camp. During battles between the US army and members of the *Volkssturm* in late April 1945, 23 women were injured, and 2 Jewish prisoners killed.[343] Mai noted that after the liberation of the Allach subcamp complex by the US army, 56 children were registered in the camp on May 12th 1945, which might suggests that some prisoners may have been transported back and forth between camps.[344]

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[338] See for example: Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*; Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*; Mai, *Das vergessene KZ*; "*BMW-Lager in Allach 1943*," Klaus Mai *KZ-Dachau-Allach*.
[339] Petra Roehrle, ""Displaced Persons" und Fluechtlinge in Karlsfeld und Umgebung," in *Nach der "Stunde Null" Stadt und Landkreis Dachau 1945 bis 1949* ed. Norbert Göttler (Herbert Utz Verlag, 2008), 110.
[340] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 214.
[341] Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach*, 19.
[342] Ibid., 19.
[343] Mai, *Das vergessene KZ,* 50.
[344] Mai, Klaus, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach.*

The Allach subcamp complex – or more specifically, the residential camps Ludwigsfeld and Karlsfeld - also featured designated brothel barracks in which six French and five Polish prostitutes were required to 'look after' the foreign workers. The brothels were initiated and financed by BMW.[345] Very little information is available on the brothel in the subcamp Allach complex, and I will therefore draw on the literature on forced sex work in the Nazi concentration camp in more general terms.

Upon the order of Heinrich Himmler, between 1942 and 1945 brothels were created in 10 of the larger concentration camps, including Dachau and Auschwitz I. These brothels were not for SS staff, but for male prisoners, meant to be an 'incentive' for particularly hard-working inmates. The prisoners had to fulfill certain preconditions, such as belonging to the category 'Aryan', able to pay for the visit, and having the necessary physical ability. Jewish prisoners or Soviet PoWs were excluded from the brothels.[346] Yet, this 'incentive' was not nearly as successful anticipated, because most of the prisoners were too exhausted and malnourished to want to visit the brothel barracks, and some of the prisoners simply wanted to talk with the women.[347] 174 of the women are known by name, but it is very likely that there were many more. The forced sex workers were 'recruited' under false promises from the camp Ravensbrueck and fell mainly into the Nazi hierarchy of 'anti-social' prisoners. This label included, among others, 'deviant' women, prostitutes, abortionists, socialists, habitual criminals, communists, Jehova's Witnesses, lesbians, alcoholics, and drug addicts. The women did not receive any money, but their roles as sex workers may have helped them to survive the camps. After the war, few of the women spoke of their experiences, and none received compensation. The topic remained a taboo for a long time, and – arguably – still continues to be.[348]

In memorial sites, the topic 'camp brothel' was avoided for a long time. In the memorial site Dachau, for example, the brothel is usually not mentioned during tours, and the permanent exhibit includes only one reference, but sex workers are never explicitly mentioned as a victim group.[349] The included text, an excerpt from a former inmate's personal diary, states:

> "Camp brothel – special building: Yesterday, on April 16 [1944], on the main camp road, six women were led to the back of the love barracks behind the last 29th block. The entire camp walked in front of the blocks and regarded the women with great interest…The Dachau camp, or more exactly, its prisoner staff, with only a few exceptions, ignored the love barracks. The quiet sabotage [of the brothel] annoyed the men in the *Jourhaus*[350] so the

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[345] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW*, 214. Werner notes that BMW stated expressly that one did not want to have anything to do with the actual operations of the B-barracks [my translations]; Gregor Schiegl, "*Impressionen aus einer Zwischenwelt*," 03.04.2016, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/geschichte-impressionen-aus-einer-zwischenwelt-1.2932106 Accessed June 15, 2020;

[346] Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell. Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern (*Schoeningh Ferdinand GmbH, 2009), 15, 239.

[347] Christoph Seidl, "*Verfluchte Stunden im KZ-Bordell*," 21.12.2010, *Merkur*, https://www.merkur.de/lokales/dachau/dachau-ort28553/verfluchte-stunden-kz-bordell-561778.html Accessed June 15, 2020.

[348] Schiegl, "*Impressionen aus einer Zwischenwelt*;" Sarah Helm, *Ravensbruck: Life and Death in Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (Anchor, 2016); Seidl, "*Verfluchte Stunden im KZ Bordell*."

[349] This avoidance of the topic is not unusual, as has been documented by Nicole Bogue, "The concentration camp brothels in memory," *Holocaust Studies*, Vol. 22, Iss. 3 (2016): 208-227: "Overwhelmingly, the camp brothels are rarely mentioned in historical monographs of the camps. Steinbacher's comprehensive book on Auschwitz does not once mention the existence of prisoner brothels at either Auschwitz I or Auschwitz-Monowitz," 209; on the other hand, "the Ravensbrück Gedenkstätte, which was the concentration camp from which the majority of forced sex workers were selected, represents the issue comprehensively," 212.

[350] *Jourhaus*: the entrance building to the Dachau concentration camp.

Rapportfuehrer[351] summoned the block elders to him and threatened, advised and tried to persuade them. [Secret journal entry by Karel Kašák, 1939 – 1945 in Dachau, April/May 1944 – excerpt]"[352]

While the site of the former brothel barracks in the Dachau memorial site is marked, it should be noted that the information board is situated rather remotely in the north-eastern corner of the outdoor space and requires visitors to deliberately seek out the panel. The information offered on the board is also in itself noteworthy: it includes three images with text underneath; the first one depicts the former disinfection building from 1941, and the text states:

> "[l]ocated behind the accommodation barracks was a fenced-off area with production centres and service buildings. These included at first a camp garden and hutches for breeding Angora rabbits. The wool and coat from the animals served as lining for Luftwaffe uniforms. In 1941 a disinfection facility for the prisoners' clothing was built. In the spring of 1944, the SS set up the so-called special barrack. This was the bordello in which female prisoners from the Ravensbrueck concentration camp were forced into prostitution."[353]

The second and third picture, which do not feature any text, depict the rabbit hutches after the liberation, and an aerial image of the barracks after liberation. The isolated placement of the information board, the negligible reference to forced sex work, and most significantly the inclusion of a reference to rabbit breading here are deeply disturbing, specifically because women in the Ravensbrueck camp were used for medical experiments and were referred to as *Kaninchen* [rabbits.][354]


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Figure 13

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[351] *Rapportfuehrer*: a non-commissioned report officer.
[352] *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, permanent exhibit, section "Arbeiten, Leben, Sterben" information board 8.3, visited fall 2018.
[353] My own notes and photographs, visit to memorial site, fall 2018.
[354] Note: the women referred to themselves as *Króliki* (Polish: rabbit) as they were tormented by the camp physicians like *Versuchskaninchen* (the English equivalent of this term would be guinea pigs; however, literally translated the German word means rabbits for experiments). See Katja Iken, "*Menschenexperimente im Frauen-KZ Ravensbrueck: Vom Mut der Kaninchen*," 23.06.2015, *Spiegel*, https://www.spiegel.de/geschichte/kz-ravensbrueck-dokumente-belegen-experimente-an-frauen-a-1036829.html Accessed June 15, 2020; "Experimental operations at Ravensbrueck concentration camp," *Medical Review Auschwitz*, https://www.mp.pl/auschwitz/journal/english/193985,experimental-operations-at-ravensbruck-concentration-camp Accessed June 15, 2020.
[355] My own photograph, memorial site Dachau, fall 2018.

In a 2010 interview, when asked about the lack of references to the forced sex work in the camp, Dr. Gabriele Hammermann, the director of the memorial site, expressed concern that a superficial reference to the camp brothels could potentially minimize the suffering of the prisoners. "It is not about deliberately wanting to silence something, but rather that even an uninformed visitor can make sense of the topic." [my translation] Dr. Hammermann expressed concern that the connection between sexuality and fascism may create a form of voyeurism – a possible link which the memorial site does not want to push.[356] A similar concern was expressed by Dr. Andrea Riedle, the former deputy director of the Dachau memorial site. During our interview, I specifically asked about the rather marginal representation of forced sex work and the brothel in the current memorial site exhibit, Riedle pointed to the difficulty inherent in the topic relating to a respectful and dignified representation: "it is also not dignified to silence the topic entirely," she said, but many of the women are no longer alive, and "often did not speak about their past because the women experienced it as shameful. This [the absence of testimony provided by the women], in turn, makes it difficult for others [contemporary researchers] to speak about it." [my translation][357] Frau Dr. Riedle feels that this topic – in spite of the challenges – should absolutely be included in a redesign of the permanent exhibition.

The experience of women also differed significantly of those of their male counterparts in the transit and later OT camp Rothschwaige: the site served as a maternity and abortion facility for the greater Munich area. The first birth was noted on September 20th 1942. Records from the district employment office from early 1944 states that births were undertaken in the *Dulag*,[358] and the camp was authorized to perform forced abortions.[359] Due to the quick increase of births, these makeshift maternity wards were no longer sufficient.[360] Similarly to the brothel barracks, very little information exists at this point which would detail the experiences and events of women at this site. I will therefore reference more general information about abortions and birth in the camps.

Pregnancies among female forced labourers were not a rare occurrence. During the first years of the war, pregnant women were deported to their home countries as fast as possible. However, from 1942 onward, with the ever-increasing need for labourers, pregnant women were no longer deported, but instead were expected to return to their workplace as soon as possible after birth. For this purpose, dedicated 'birth barracks' or central birth camps – such as Rothschwaige – were created. While little is known about the care women and infants received in these places, not surprisingly, reports of survivors have indicated that deliveries occurred under the most primitive of circumstances. The death of mother or infant was quietly accepted, and mothers and their babies were separated soon after birth to enable the woman to return to her workplace. Particularly during a time of rations, and a pressing demand for labourers, the children of foreign forced labourers were considered an unnecessary burden, and as a result, many of the newborns died of illnesses or starvation.[361] From the spring of 1943 onward, abortions were

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[356] Seidl, "*Verfluchte Stunden im KZ-Bordell*," [my translation].
[357] Interview Dr. Andrea Riedle, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, fall 2018; see also Bogue, "The concentration camp brothels in memory."
[358] *Dulag* is the acronym for *Durchganslager* = transit camp.
[359] Heusler, *Auslaendereinsatz*, 362.
[360] *Ibid*., 210.
[361] *Ibid*.

performed on female forced labourers as a form of 'culling' of 'racially inferior' offspring.[362] Under these circumstances, it is impossible to speak of the free will of the pregnant women.

Some additional information on such 'birth camps' can be gleaned from other similar sites; for example, in the Rieselfeldern in Waltrop-Holthausen – likely one of the largest birth and abortion camps in the German Reich, unmarried foreign female workers were sent for their delivery. It has been established that at least 500 infants perished. In the care facility for foreign children, the camp *Kiesgrube* in Dresden, of the 497 children who were born, 225 infants and toddlers died. One of the very few pieces of information which exist is represented in the permanent exhibition at the Dachau *Gedenkstaette*: it is stated, that the Ukrainian Alexander Sarapkin and his pregnant wife, were deported as forced labourers to the German Reich. After two attempts to escape, Alexander was arrested, and brought to the Dachau main camp, where he was hung the following day. He was 19 years old. His heavily pregnant wife was brought to the Rothschwaige camp to give birth, but it is unknown whether she or her newborn survived.[363]

Remarkable are male perceptions of female prisoners at the Allach, and respectively, the Dachau camp. Hermann Riemer, a survivor of the Allach camp, describes in his memoir for April 15th 1944 the arrival of a transport of Jewish female concentration camp prisoner: they were in a "pitiful state […] the majority did not have shoes and had wrapped their feet in old rags […] they shuffled past us, tired, exhausted, famished." Yet, in spite of the terrible physical and mental state of these women, Riemer notes that they were "ungroomed," and furthermore, that "we were ashamed of our female companions."[364] It is remarkable, that female concentration camp prisoners in the midst of their misery and suffering, are perceived as 'ungroomed' by a fellow camp inmate, and furthermore, that their state should cause the male inmates to be 'ashamed,' rather than filled with pity and sympathy. With respect to the female forced sex workers in the Dachau brothel, Riemer remarks that "the female prisoners from the concentration camp Ravensbrueck […] were forced, with more or less severe compulsion, to serve the legally sanctioned fornication," and furthermore, that

> "[t]he story of the unfortunate women and girls, who were thus spoiled for life [would provide] an interesting chapter for the study of moral [as they had been] lured by promises to be released after 3 months and thereby to escape hunger and death, the majority surrendered to it […] but not a single one was released. Once she was disused, the body emaciated and destroyed, the unfortunate were delivered to the poison injection and the crematoria." [my translation][365]

Riemer seems to imply that some of the women who had been forced into sex work in the camp brothel may have – if not with ease, then at least with little resistance – gone along with the wishes of the perpetrators. Additionally, the fact that Riemer contemplates a 'study in morality' in the context of the motivations and causes for each one of the enslaved women, is astonishing, specifically because we know from the extensive body of literature on prisoner experiences in the camps that inmates were often forced to make impossible choices.

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[362] Moissl, Norbert, *Aspekte der Geburtshilfe in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933 bis 1945 am Beispiel der I. Frauenklinik der Universität München*, dissertation Medizinischen Fakultät der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität zu München, submitted 2005; Heusler, *Auslaendereinsatz*.
[363] *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, permanent exhibit, the Dachau Concentration Camp as an Execution Site, information board 11.3, visited fall 2018.
[364] Hermann Riemer, *Sturz ins Dunkel* (Muenchen, Funk, 1947), 183.
[365] *Ibid*., 177.

Yet, such perceptions by men of female prisoners and forced sex workers were not uncommon. Eugen Kogon, who wrote a deeply insightful and one of the earliest publications about the concentration camp system, stated that the women in the brothel in Buchenwald "with very few exceptions, have complied with their fate quite uninhibited," and he furthermore assumes that they very likely already did not live an "exactly overly serious lifestyle" before their time in the camp.[366]

Rabbi Max Eichhorn, who was with the American liberators when they encountered the Dachau main camp and eventually the Allach subcamp complex, took an extensive account of his experiences. After describing the lack of hygiene and the ordeal of having to use delousing powder, he notes:[367]

> "[A]nother exception to this condition of disease and dirt was the barracks of Hungarian, Greek, and Italian Jewish girls, 160 of them, who had been brought to Dachau just a week before. Some of them had been workers in the factories and farms, some had been used in German military brothels. They had been treated with so little consideration by the Germans that most of them had lost the female's normal sense of modesty. When, from time to time, my duties brought me to their barracks, they continued to dress or undress in my presence as though I were not there."[368]

Eichhorn, thus, is perturbed by the 'lack of modesty' which is exhibited by the female former prisoners. Such observations are astonishing, given the horrific experiences these women had just survived – Eichhorn names 'German military brothels' – and the common sight of partially and at times fully unclothed bodies in the camps, particularly during the first days after liberation. Indeed, male nudity was accepted as a matter of fact, as in the account of Abraham Hochhaeuser: "Most prisoners were already so weak, that they could only lie on the ground. During the delousing, they took our clothes away, and gave us new rags. Some literally walked around naked."[369]

The experiences of different groups of women in the Allach subcamp complex has so far been largely neglected in research, and similarly, very few visual representations of women from the camp have so far appeared. One photograph is on display in the permanent exhibit at the Dachau memorial site, in section New Prisoner Groups, 9.11 Women: here, a small photograph shows an emaciated woman in rags sitting on the ground as she looks up at the camera. Her dark hair is cropped short, and due to her gaunt appearance, it is difficult to estimate her age. The label of the photograph only states: "Female prisoner in the Allach subcamp after liberation, 1945."

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[366] Christiane Kohl, "*Zwei Mark fuer 15 Minuten*," 03.09.2010, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/kz-bordell-zwei-mark-fuer-15-minuten-1.995532 Accessed June 15, 2020; Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell*, 16.

[367] From his notes, it is unclear whether Eichhorn is referring to the women in the Allach subcamp complex or in the Dachau main camp.

[368] "Rabbi Max Eichorn," *Chaplains at War*, https://chaplainsatwar.wordpress.com/2011/01/05/rabbi-max-eichorn/ Accessed June 15, 2020.

[369] Abrahahm Hochhaeuser, *Unter dem Gelben Stern: Ein Tatsachenbericht aus der Zeit von 1933 bis 1945* (Humanitas Verlag GmbH Koblenz, 1948) 52.

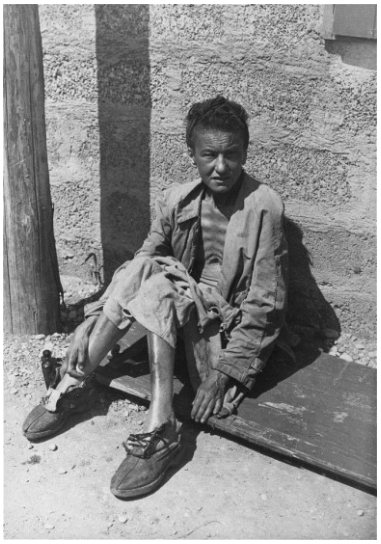 [370]

Figure 14

In addition to this single photograph, isolated individual women appear in a short film, taken by the American liberators, which is available from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It was therefore an unanticipated surprise, when I encountered several photographs taken by the American liberators of women at the former Allach subcamp, which so far have not been published. At the same time, considering the absence of research into this aspect of the former camp, it is perhaps not unexpected, that these photographs have not been used in the context of the site. The date range of the photographs is set at between April 29th to May 5th 1945 – since the Allach subcamp was only liberated on April 30th 1945, this date range is incorrect. While it cannot be determined with absolute certainty in which area of the camp the photographs were taken, the brick barracks which are visible in many of the pictures suggest that this may have been the former Jewish camp. The photographs provide insight into the deplorable conditions which existed in the camp even after liberation: in one photograph, two former female prisoners cook outside on a make-shift stove. The photographs are particularly remarkable, in that they not only show the female former prisoners, but also child survivors.

[370] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive Desig #17.91, W/S #18067 CD # 0057, "An emaciated woman survivor in Allach after the liberation of the camp," updated: 06/25/1996, accessed July 2019.

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Figure 15

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[371] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18068 CD # 0057," A group of woman survivors in Allach with an American soldier after the liberation of the camp," updated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2019.
[372] United States Holocaust Memorial, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18065 CD # 0057, "Young survivors in Allach after the liberation of the camp," updated: 01/07/2005, accessed July 2018.
[373] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18059 CD # 0057, "An unidentified photographer takes a photo of women survivors in Allach," updated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2018.
[374] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18054 CD # 0057, "Women survivors in Allach gathered outside of a barracks after the liberation of the camp," updated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2019.
[375] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18063 CD # 0057, "An American soldier in the Allach concentration camp lights a cigarette for a women (sic) survivor," uUpdated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2019.


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Figure 16

6. After liberation

Until the liberation on April 30th 1945, the camp had expanded to become the largest subcamp complex of the concentration camp Dachau. During the first months of 1945, and particularly shortly before the liberation of the Allach subcamp complex, the numbers of prisoners exploded: more transports arrived from evacuated camps as well as transfers from other subcamps and the completely overrun main camp Dachau, and these prisoners were no longer registered. While on April 26th 1945, 8,970 inmates were reported in the Allach subcamp complex – although it is unclear which specific subcamps are included in this count – in the last days the number increased to up to 22,000.[379] With an increasing crisis in receiving supplies and further declining hygienic circumstances, the already desperate situation in the Allach subcamp complex became

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[376] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18064 CD # 0057, "Women survivors in Allach cook a meal over an open fire after the liberation of the camp," updated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2019.
[377] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18060 CD # 0057, "Women survivors in Allach," updated: 06/24/1996, accessed July 2019.
[378] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Archive, Desig #17.91, W/S #18069 CD # 0057 "An American soldier in Allach points to a tattoo on the arm of a young woman survivor." Updated: 01/07/2005, accessed July 2019.
[379] Benz and Distel, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945,* 426.

catastrophic, and many prisoners perished shortly prior to liberation. Work at the BMW plant was first temporarily, and finally by March 1945 complete and permanently stopped. During the late evening of April 26th 1945, a death march left the Allach camp complex, and additional smaller groups under SS guard left the camp thereafter. Between 10,000 to 14,500 prisoners remained in the camp, as the SS destroyed documents and torture equipment, before they finally disappeared. Klaus Mai suggests at this point at total of 316 Jewish victims in the Allach subcamp complex, including 3 women. With the exception of 1 Pole, 1 Slovene, 1 Dutch, and 1 French, all were Hungarian. According to Mai's records, the youngest victim was 17 and the oldest 61 years old.[380] After the liberation of the subcamp complex, many of the former prisoners were unable to leave the camp right away. The area was initially placed under quarantine, and it was thus only by June 1945 that many of the former prisoners were able to leave.

[380] Mai, *Der KZ- Außenlagerkomplex Dachau-Allach,* 48.

CHAPTER 4. From the Allach subcamp complex to the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld: sedimentation of memory and history

> About 'othering': "I define othering as discursive processes by which powerful groups, who may or may not make up a numerical majority, define subordinate groups into existence in a reductionist way which ascribe problematic and/or inferior characteristics to these subordinate groups. Such discursive processes affirm the legitimacy and superiority of the powerful and condition identity formation among the subordinate." (Jensen, 2011)[381]
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> On post-colonial theory: "German postcolonialism has evolved into a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon, one that envelops memories of colonialism in white German and diasporic communities, but also the all-pervasive paradigm of the Holocaust, as well as the experiences of Afro-Germans, and, only to a small and very specific extent, the experiences of migrant communities into the present day." (Schilling, 2015)[382]

While the area of the former BMW production plant as well as the former subcamp complex have changed considerably since the war era, a number of material as well as socio-political aspects of the site itself, its populations, as well as the relationship between the residents and the surrounding communities, including the city of Munich, also demonstrate continuity. The post-war uses of the area of the former subcamp complex with its overlapping timelines and usages, changing occupants, additional expansions and constructions, as well as the highly diverse, at times transient population, is not dissimilar from the convoluted evolution of the camp itself. Likewise, the contemporary relationship between the residents of the settlement and the surrounding community has to be considered in context of the previous history of the site, as well as the general treatment and perceptions of displaced person's (DPs)[383] in post-war Germany in broader terms. In her nuanced and insightful ethnographic exploration of the contemporary Ludwigsfeld, Vepřek describes the highly diverse narratives, interpretations, socio-cultural and historical layers, as well as material traces and spaces poignantly as *(Un)Gleichzeitigkeiten* (a wordplay on inconsistencies and concurrencies), which gives this area its unique and complex character.[384]

Drawing from Sune Jensen's discussion of the responses of a marginalized ethnic group to othering, I will use this approach to explore the impact of an ascribed homogenous identity by the German population to specific populations after the end of the Second World War by focusing specifically on the residents in the Ludwigsfeld. Jensen argues that "the concept of othering is well suited for understanding power structures as well as the historic symbolic

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[381] Sune Jensen, "Othering, identity formation and agency," *Qualitative Studies*, Vol. 2, Iss. 2 (2011): 63 – 78, 65.
[382] Britta Schilling, "German Postcolonialism in Four Dimensions: A Historical Perspective," *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 18, Iss. 4 (2015): 427-439, 428.
[383] The historian Wolfgang Jacobmeyer defines as 'Displaced Persons' primarily the masses of forced labourers and those who were forcibly displaced – mainly from Eastern European countries - as a result of the National Socialist domination during the Second World War. Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, *Vom Zwangsarbeiter zum heimatlosen Auslaender: Die Displaced Persons in Westdeutschland, 1945 – 1951* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985).
[384] Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten.*

meanings conditioning such identity formation."[385] Thus, by using the concept of othering in the context of the settlement Ludwigsfeld, I seek to examine the continuities of historical power hierarchies, and the extended impact on the formation of a specific identity. Furthermore, by building on post-colonial theories, I am particularly interested in investigating how a "positive and heroic memory of colonialism," which was circulated in Nazi Germany amongst the majority of the national population whereby violence and racial superiority were legitimized, continued to inform post-war perceptions of minority populations in relation to the site of the former forced labour camp Allach.[386]

By following Amar Acheraiou's argument that colonialism was a capitalist venture, I will establish a connection between the state-sanctioned and socially widely tolerated exploitation of foreign resources and labour force during Nazi Germany, and the accepted social and economic marginalization and segregation of specific minority populations in post-war Germany.[387]

This chapter provides a general chronology of the post-war developments of the area of the former subcamp complex Allach as well as the associated BMW plant leading up to the present. In this context, I am particularly concerned with how wider historical and social discourses have and continue to shape the lives of the residents in the Ludwigsfeld. I will begin by providing a chronological overview of the developments of the location that resulted in the emergence of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld; the evolution of its unique community as well as its conflicted relationship with the surrounding population and the city of Munich; and finally, the contemporary struggles over development, capitalist and communal interests, and the unsettled heritage of the site.

1. Munich and the memory of the Nazi era

Munich has been shaped by the Third Reich both spatially but also mnemonically like no other German city: Munich, after all, was the cradle of Nazism, and although Berlin remained the official capital of the German Reich, Munich became the "Capital of the Movement" as well as the "Capital of the German Art." Nazi Germany's first concentration camp was established in 1933 in Munich's suburb Dachau, and during the Second World War, Munich became a significant contributor to the production of armaments. Large Munich companies, such as BMW and Krauss-Maffei, prospered with government contracts. At the same time, Munich soon became the site of the development of monumental Nazi architecture.

After the end of the war in 1945, German cities were not only left with the severe physical damage, but also the historical legacy. In his seminal work on architecture and memory, Gavriel Rosenfeld poses that the Third Reich impacted postwar development in German cities fundamentally:

> "[T]he ways in which Germans reconstructed the ruins of historic buildings, dealt with surviving examples of Nazi architecture and erected new monuments to commemorate the

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[385] Jensen, "Othering, identity formation and agency," 63.
[386] Schilling, "German Postcolonialism in Four Dimensions," 428.
[387] According to Acheraiou, colonialism was a capitalist undertaking which appropriated and plundered foreign lands with the support of military force, and legitimized violence in the name of progress. Amar Acheraiou, *Rethinking Postcolonialism Colonialist Discourse in Modern Literatures and the Legacy of Classical Writers* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1985).

horrors of the Third Reich and World War II all directly reflect their struggle to come to terms with the Nazi past."[388]

Rosenfield argues that architecture in post-war Germany was infused with significant symbolic historical meaning, in that the struggle over the architectural style reflects the existence of competing strategies of remembering the Nazi era. To some, modern architecture promised a total break with the practices of the past, while those who were proponents of a traditional architectural style sought to reconnect with a pre-Nazi past.

Perhaps in no other German state was this divide as pronounced as in Bavaria, and more specifically in the city of Munich. Many Bavarians felt idealistic nostalgia about the *Wittelsbacher* monarchy which appeared remote from the Nazi past and atrocities and therefore offered a convenient framework for imaginations of a distinct local and regional identity untouched by the Third Reich. The Christian Social Union (CSU), founded in 1945, is a Christian-democratic and conservative party with a strong regionalist identity. The CSU made the Bavarian *Heimat* a key element of its political agenda, and by referring to Bavaria's one-thousand-year history, claiming that Bavarian nation-building began with the Bavarian Monarchy in 1806 and emphasizing the territorial continuity, the party bracketed the period of the Third Reich as an aberration in the Bavarian state tradition. This emphasis on historical continuity was reflected in the immediate post-war reconstruction of historical buildings and churches: no other German state had such a high number of reconstructed architectural structures as Bavaria, in spite of a desperate need of the population for housing. Minister of Finance, Rudolf Eberhard, stated in 1958, that a sense of obligation was felt to reconstruct the Munich *Wittelsbacher Residenz*.[389] The reconstructed historical buildings in Bavaria represent in a material way the attempts of the Bavarian government to connect to this positively imagined past as well as the claims to a one-thousand-year-old history. Yet, at the same time, with an increasing prosperity and stability, between the late 1950s to the early 1970s, modern architecture found increasing acceptance as it articulated a rise of optimism and faith in progress. During this time, Munich underwent a rapid phase of urban modernization, which resulted in the creation of new high-rise buildings, such as the BMW headquarters.[390]

Bavaria underwent significant economic and social changes after 1945, and over the course of only two decades, the formerly largely agricultural state transformed into a centre for high-tech industries which, today, employ 12.4% of the workforce – the highest percentage in Europe.[391] The city of Munich, by embracing both modernism and traditionalist tendencies, soon prided itself as a "*Weltstadt mit Herz*." The evolution of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach emerged in this specific context of local and regional identities and sentiments.

2. The BMW plant after the liberation

While the BMW main plant in Milbertshofen suffered considerable damage from aerial raids, the Allach plant had remained relatively intact. After the liberation of the Allach subcamp complex,

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[388] Gavriel Rosenfeld, "Architecture and the Memory of Nazism in Postwar Munich," *German Politics & Society*, Vol. 16, Iss. 4 (49), Special Issue on German cities (Winter 1998): 140 – 159, 140.
[389] Christoph Daxelmueller, et al. (eds) *Wiederaufbau und Wirtschaftswunder in Bayern. Aufsaetze zur Bayerischen Landesausstellung 2009* (Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2009), 41.
[390] Rosenfeld, "Architecture and the Memory of Nazism."
[391] John Hooper, "The laptop and lederhosen formula," 02.09.2002, *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/sep/02/germany.eu Accessed May 2, 2018.

US troops seized and occupied the plant, and already in July 1945, the establishment of the Karlsfeld Ordnance Depot (KOD) began. The KOD was managed by the US army, although it was still operated by the BMW corporation. The company now depended exclusively on contracts of the US army for repair, maintenance, and acquisitions. While the BMW plant Allach thereby became one of the most modern and fully functioning factories in occupied post-war Germany as well as one of the largest employers in Munich, the exclusive contracts with the US army prevented any further technological or entrepreneurial development of the corporation. [392] The Allach plant thus soon became a burden for the company, and management began to search for a purchaser from 1949 onward. In April 1954, the KOD was dissolved, and only a few weeks prior BMW came to an agreement with MAN. MAN, or *Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nuernberg AG* [engineering works Augsburg-Nuremberg] was also involved in the armament production during the Second World War by supplying diesel engines for submarines, tanks, gun parts as well as artillery. The company was split up after the war, with one branch focusing on commercial vehicles, such as trucks and buses. The sale of a large portion of the Allach plant to MAN included three large production halls, the power plant, administrative buildings, as well as the former *Wuermlager* and the *Wohnlager* Karlsfeld, which was eventually renamed to Gerberau.[393] After the initial ban on engine production, which was placed on Germany after the war, BMW recommenced its production of aircraft engines in 1957, and by 1959 BMW was engaged in the production of turbojet engines for the German Air Force's Starfighter fleet. MAN expressed an interest in the remaining parts of the plant in 1959, and subsequently became a 50% partner in the BMW turbine production GmbH. From this collaboration emerged in 1965 the MAN Turbo GmbH, and in 1969 – with the involvement of Daimler Benz AG – the MTU. MTU Aero Engines, which stands for *Motoren – und Turbinen – Union GmbH* [engine and turbine union,] is one of the world's leading companies in the development and production of engines for combat aircraft. Thus, a direct connection and continuity exists not only in terms of the site's ownership, but also in terms of its economic usage.

On the site of the former Allach concentration camp is today's *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld (new residential area Ludwigsfeld). The area of the former *Wohnlager* Ludwigsfeld and the *Russenlager* are now occupied by the MAN Truck Forum. In the area of the former *Wohnsiedlung* Karlsfeld, and the SS penalty camp is today's suburb Gerberau, and the area of the actual plant is today under the ownership of MTU and MAN. From April 1946 onward, the former transit camp Rothschwaige was – again – used as a temporary camp for refugees, with daily transports of 1200 refugees and other persons. From May 1947 onward, the camp became a permanent settlement site with approximately 1,500 residents.[394] The former *Wuermlager* was initially used to provide shelter for refugees from former German-occupied territories. Several families were housed in the individual stone barracks before they were later transferred to the former *Wohnlager* Karlsfeld.

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[392] Juergen Seidl, *Die Bayerischen Motorenwerke (BMW) 1945 – 1969*, Staatlicher Rahmen und unternehmerisches Handeln, (München, 2002), 9-11.
[393] Annegret Braun and Norbert Goettler (ed) *Nach der 'Stunde NuII: Historische Nahaufnahmen aus den Gemeinden des Landkreises Dachau*, *1945 – 1955* (Utz Verlag GmbH, 2013), 70.
[394] *Ibid*., 413.

3. From forced labourers to displaced persons and *heimatlose Auslaender* – perceptions of 'the Other' and processes of 'othering' in post-war Germany

After the defeat of Nazi Germany, the millions of displaced persons (DPs) with highly diverse histories and needs posed an incredible challenge for the Allied forces: at the beginning of 1945, four to five million German civilians fled from Eastern areas, including Prussia, Pomerania and the Baltic states, and after the end of the war, an additional 11,7 million had fled or were expulsed.[395] In addition, the allied armies liberated around 6.5 to 7 million DPs, among them 50,000 to 75,000 Jewish survivors.[396] In total, about 21 million persons desperately needed housing, food and medical care, and non-German citizens needed to potentially be repatriated. Over 11 million DPs were originally from Soviet-controlled countries and Poland, and while many wanted to return to their home countries after the war, the increasing tensions with the Soviet Union made their return eventually impossibly, so that by late summer 1945 the forced repatriation of eastern European citizens ceased. By October 1945, By October 45 about 5.2 million DPs had been repatriated with 1.7 million persons remaining in west German DP camps during the winter of 1945-1946.[397] 278,000 DPs resided in Bavaria alone in October 1946.[398]

In order to deal effectively with the vast numbers of people, the Allies created hundreds of so-called DP camps – mainly in the western occupied zones. Numerous camps became a make-shift solution to house the vast numbers of persons, and for many DPs, the camp became their in-between home for an indeterminate period of time. The logistical challenges were overwhelming and pressing, and as a result, decisions were based largely on necessity and available resources, rather than with the best interest of the DPs emotional and psychological well-being in mind: DPs were oftentimes housed in the barracks of former forced labour camps or military housing. These areas were surrounded by fences and guarded by soldiers, which re-created the camp atmosphere from which many of the DPs had only recently escaped. At the same time, the Allies also seized private homes for additional living spaces, with created resentment among the German population toward the DPs.

Of the remaining individuals, many hoped to emigrate, but were declined due to health concerns or a lack of skills; others did not wish to emigrate and were simply staying put. It was particularly difficult to repatriate Jewish persons, as they had not only lost their entire families, but also because their livelihoods and oftentimes entire communities had been destroyed. In addition, the return of Jewish survivors to their home towns was not welcomed by their former non-Jewish neighbours.[399] By 1950, 200,000 so-called 'hard-core DPs' remained, who had been found unsuitable for resettlement, due to illnesses, impairment or lack of skills.[400] This selection, of course, is highly problematic in that it not only reproduces criteria which were used to select and deport those forced labourers who were no longer able to work, but also in that they fail to

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[395] "*Demographische Verschiebungen in Deutschland, 1945*," *Zukunft braucht Erinnerung*, https://www.zukunft-braucht-erinnerung.de/demographische-verschiebungen-in-deutschland-1945/ Accessed August 5, 2020.
[396] Angelika Koenigseder and Juliane Wetzel, *Lebensmut im Wartesaal: Die juedischen DPs (Displaced Persons) im Nachkriegs-deutschland* (Fischer Verlag, 2005).
[397] Jacobmeyer, *Vom Zwangsarbeiter zum heimatlosen Auslaender,* 369.
[398] Kierra Crago-Schneider, *Jewish 'Shtetls' in Postwar Germany: An Analysis of Interactions Among Jewish Displaced Persons, Germans, and Americans between 1945 and 1957 in Bavaria*, Dissertation, UCLA, 2013, https://escholarship.org/content/qt5wn268qr/qt5wn268qr.pdf Accessed August 1, 2020.
[399] Braun and Goettler, *Nach der 'Stunde NuII: Historische Nahaufnahmen*, 409. See also: Jan Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz* (Random House, 2007).
[400] Andrew Markus, "Labour and Immigration 1046-9: The Displaced Persons Program," *Labour History*, Vol. 47 (Nov. 1984): 73 – 90.

establish the connection between the psychological and physical abuse that many of the forced labourers had suffered, and which often resulted in lifelong consequences.

With the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, the administrative responsibility for the remaining DPs was placed with the fledgling democratic nation state. The Allies exerted pressure on the West German government to grant DPs a secure legal status, which led to the creation of the *Gesetz ueber die Rechtstellung heimatloser Auslaender* [law to the legal status of homeless foreigners] in 1951, whereby DPs were provided – in theory - with approximate equality before the law, with the exclusion of the right to vote and to create political organizations.[401] Due to their non-German status, however, they were excluded from the privileges of German refugees and expellees. Yet, the International Refugee Organization noted that DPs were not *heimatlos* per se, and instead recommended the term "refugees under the protection of the UN." However, as the German government wanted to avoid fully equal status of DPs with German refugees, this recommendation was rejected. The term *heimatlose Auslaender* is fraught with negative connotations while, at the same time, inconvenient reminders of German guilt for the displacement of these individuals in the first place, is thus removed.[402]

The remaining 'hard-core' DPs found themselves in dire circumstances, in that they had experienced deeply traumatic events and uprooting, which resulted in their placement in a DP camp in the first place. They were unable to leave Germany – the country of the perpetrators – or to return to their home country, depended on the German state for support, did not receive the same privileges as German refugees and expellees, and were already, and increasingly so, perceived negative by the German population. Such stereotypical and contemptuous views were a direct consequence of the portrayal of Eastern European populations as inferior, and according to an OMGUS opinion poll in 1947, 81% of German citizens noted that DPs were not German citizens. Rather, Germans regarded the DPs as "little more than a short-term nuisance which was indelibly tied to the foreign occupation of Germany," and resented the alleged privileged treatment DPs received.[403] These negative perceptions and stereotypes are, what Ruth Lister describes as a

> "process of differentiation and demarcation, by which the line is drawn between 'us' and 'them' – between the more and the less powerful – and through which social distance is established and maintained."[404]

Such perceptions omitted the fact that the DPs were the immediate victims of the Nazi regime, and rather confirmed a German narrative of victimhood. [405]

In turn, the DPs had little incentive, and did not see advantages, to seek to be integrated into German society, and they felt – understandably - animosity toward Germans. It was commonplace to settle non-German refugees and DPs at the periphery of cities, either because former military compounds or former forced labour camps were situated in these areas, making management easier; or because it kept the often severely ill DPs at arms-length from the German

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[401] According to Anusch Thiel, women with German citizenship lost this status if they married a *heimatlosen Auslaender*, interview with Anusch Thiel, Ludwigsfeld, November 2018.
[402] The particular connotations of *heimatlose Auslaender* will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.
[403] Duncan Cooper, *Immigration and German identity in the Federal Republic of Germany from 1945 to 2006* (Lit Verlag, 2012) 101.
[404] Ruth Lister, *Poverty*, (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2004), 101
[405] Braun and Goettler, *Nach der 'Stunde NuII: Historische Nahaufnahmen*, 70.

population. At the same time, this segregation offered little opportunity to challenge existing prejudices through personal interactions or engagement, and DPs were stereotyped based on racial ideologies as well as fears of material disadvantages. Jewish DPs in particular were perceived as 'threat' to the German population, who accused them of plunder and disproportional criminality unsubstantiated by facts. Jewish DPs were also a reminder of German guilt and responsibility; through a psychological reversal, guilt was projected onto them.[406]

This particular socio-political context shaped the developments at the site of the former forced labour camp Allach. After the liberation of the Allach on April 30th 1945 by soldiers of the 45th infantry division of the US army, the entire subcamp complex was placed under quarantine for several weeks due to the rampant typhus epidemic, and many former prisoners were unable to leave the camp until June 1945. Many of them remained even longer, as they were unsure where they should return to and feared reprisals for alleged collaboration. By September 1945, the wooden barracks and the former SS barracks were torn down, and by October 1945, the US army established an internment camp for German PoWs in the brick barracks in the eastern part of the camp.[407] The information available about the usage of specific areas of the former subcamp complex between late 1945 and 1948 is somewhat limited, but it likely that some of the barracks continued to be used by the US army for storage, while others may have been occupied by refugees and expellees from Eastern European countries.[408] During the summer of 1946, the *Gesellschaft zur Erfassung von Ruestungsgut mbH* [office for the collection of armament] was founded in the US zone, which was later renamed to *Staatliche Erfassungsgesellschaft fuer oeffentliches Gut mbH* (StEG) [state registration office for public goods,] which functioned as a trustee of public goods. One of the purposes of this organization was to record and reutilize wares of the former Wehrmacht, such as textiles, clothing, and shoes. The *StEG* took over the stone barracks in the eastern part of the former camp complex in 1948 and was subsequently resolved in July 1950. In November 1950, German refugees, and expellees, who had until then been housed in the Will-*Kaserne* (a former German army barracks), had to clear their preliminary shelter to make room for personnel of the US army. These 228 *Kasernenverdraengte* [loosely translated displaced persons from army barracks] were moved into the former *StEG Lager* Ludwigsfeld, which had now become the *Regierungslager* [federal camp] Ludwigsfeld Muenchen 54 and was eventually expanded to become *Bundesauswandererlager* [federal emigration camp] Muenchen-Karlsfeld, where German citizens awaited emigration to the USA or Canada.[409] This camp housed between 400 to 500 persons. Several construction projects were undertaken in order to accommodate the occupants, such as a large dining hall, which was added to one of the remaining stone barracks. By 1952, when the camp closed, about 3,000 Germans had emigrated.[410]

In addition to these functions of the former camp site, by beginning of 1951, new plans for the construction of social housing programs were developed to address the ongoing housing

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[406] Juliane Wetzel, "*Aufruhr in der Moehlstraße. Muenchen als Ort juedischen Lebens*,"in *'Juden unerwuenscht'. Anfeindungen und Ausschreitungen nach dem Holocaust* ed. Wolfgang Benz und Brigitte Mihok (Berlin 2016), 57–76.
[407] Ewgenij Repnikov, "*KZ-Friedhof Karlsfeld*," (also: *Massengrab München-Karlsfeld bzw. Sammelgrab im ehemaligen KZ-Außenlager Allach*), https://www.kugel1986ev.com/news/gedenktafel/Accessed August 1, 2020; FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*.
[408] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 28; Mai, *Das vergessene KZ*, 45.
[409] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 28.
[410] Repnikov, "*KZ-Friedhof Karlsfeld*,".

shortage. In this context, the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* [new residential settlement] Muenchen-Ludwigsfeld emerged, which, at that time, was the largest construction project in the state of Bavaria.[411] Due to the already existing infrastructure of the former camp, the area was immediately considered for development. The land, on which the former subcamp complex was situated, had originally been leased from local farmers, and in March 1945, BMW sold the land illegally to the SS *Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* [SS Main Economic and Administrative office.] Although the land was technically still under the ownerships of the farmers from which it had been leased, the State of Bavaria assumed the responsibility for the area.[412] The federal government purchased the land, the plans for the new development of 690 apartments were finalized and necessary funds were released by the German government. The construction of the two- and three-story apartment buildings began by early 1952, and between December 1952 and March 1953, 2,908 residents moved into the units – of these, 2,142 – a total of 74% - were *heimatlose Auslaender*.[413] The apartments provided very basic comforts, with no individual bathrooms or central heating, but at an initially very modest rent at 0.90 to 1.10 Deutsche Mark per square metre.[414]

The remaining brick barracks of the former OT camp, which had formerly housed Germans awaiting emigration, stood empty for two years, were subsequently renovated, and then used as *Notunterkunft Ost* [emergency shelter East,] Muenchen Ludwigsfeld to house refugees from the Soviet zone, as well as in 1956 a group of Jewish DPs, who awaited emigration to the USA and Canada. According to an eyewitness, one of the barracks functioned as a synagogue.[415] The former federal camp Ludwigsfeld, which had formerly housed the *Kasernenverdraengten*, was now also occupied by non-Germans of diverse national backgrounds, until they also were gradually moved into new living spaces.

4. Creating a new home for *heimatlose Auslaender* in the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld from outside and from within

The social and spatial isolation of the settlement necessitated and contributed to the evolution of a self-contained and autonomous community. During the summer of 1953, spaces for 8 small shops were opened, which eventually housed two butchers, a bakery, a dairy, two grocery stores, a drugstore, a textile and household goods store, and finally a hairdresser.[416]

A symbolic finishing touch which marked the completion of the new settlement was the unveiling of the modest monumental stele at the corner of *Kristall-* and *Rubinstrasse* in July 1954. The installation of this feature particularly at the time of the establishment of the new settlement is noteworthy in that it not only exemplifies the artificial creation of a community which did not evolve organically or self-determined over time, but also in that it reflects the expectations of the settlement's planners that the new local residents should have sentiments and ideas about their lives and future which were harmonious with the surrounding German population as well as within their group. The design of this stele, created by the Munich artist Elmar Dietz, depicts rural motifs, such as hunting, farming, fishing, as well as two quotes by the

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411 *Ibid*.
412 *Ibid*.
413 *Ibid*; FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 32.
414 Mai *60 Jahre Neue Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*, 43.
415 FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 33; Repnikov, "*KZ-Friedhof Karlsfeld*,".
416 Vepřek, Ludwigsfeld: (*Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten*, 31.

writers Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Christoph von Schmid.[417] While the stele is unobtrusive with respect to its design and situatedness (in a corner of one of the green spaces in the community, surrounded by trees), as well as its choice of universal motives and absence of any references to the recent dark history, it is of specific interest precisely because of its symbolic nature. The two quotes which are inscribed on the stele are, first, from *Lieder ueber Wald und Heide* (songs about forest and heather) by Schmid: "*Wie lieblich schallt durch Busch und Wald des Waldhorns suesser Klang*," [How lovely the sweet sound of the French horn resounds through the bush and forest – my translation]; and second, from *Gesang der Geister ueber den Wassern* [Song of the spirits over the waters – my translation] by Goethe: "*Des Menschen Seele gleicht dem Wasser*," [the human soul is like water – my translation]. Not only are these two excerpts of compositions remarkable due to the choice of writers of German Romanticism, thus, referencing an era which, on the one hand, looked to the past for simpler values while celebrating the beauty of nature, but also in that they mirror the emergence of the highly popular German *Heimatfilme*, which emerged during the post-war years – not dissimilar to the German romantic movement – and celebrated a simpler world far removed from the harsh realities of the industrialized revolution and the Second World War. The settings of these films were usually rural, such as in the Alps or the Black Forest, featuring traditional houses, folk costumes and folk music.[418] Aside from providing an escapist idyll on screen, *Heimatfilme* depicted "a world of everyman in villages and hometowns and focusing on the solidarity and conformity to social relations and values."[419] Any references to recent German history as well as postwar problems, such as destroyed German cities, wounded soldiers, or the Holocaust, were absent. In the context of post-war Germany, with its millions of refugees, expellees and displaced persons who had lost their *Heimat*, idyllic images of the benign unchanging beauty of the countryside not only eclipsed the years between 1933 and 1945, but also afforded "the positive resolution of contemporary social and ideological concerns about territory and identity."[420] As the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld was designed by German authorities for *heimatlose Auslaender*, these underlying themes and notions of the stele are in some ways cynical, and at the same time, represent the outlook of the general German public, which sought to focus on the future, while gesturing to a Germany untouched by National Socialism, the Second World War and the Holocaust.

While considerable efforts were made to overwrite and obscure the past in the Ludwigsfeld and to avoid references to the Nazi era – for instance, through curved street directions or many green spaces between houses – numerous tangible traces of the past have remained on site. Some of these structures and shapes are more obvious than others, but during the construction of the Ludwigsfeld, deliberate choices had been made by the planners and developers to leave specific structures in place – the motivations are unknown. The very outline and internal structure of the camp complex informed and shaped the new settlement Ludwigsfeld. The streets of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld were intended to disrupt the former structure of the camps and erase particularly prominent features, such as the former *Appellplatz* or gates, but the outline and layout of the camp is nevertheless discernable in the new settlement: today's Diamant- and

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[417] Christopher von Schmid (1768 – 1854); Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832).
[418] Jost Hermand, James Steakley (eds). *Heimat, Nation, Fatherland: The German Sense of Belonging* (Peter Lang, 1996).
[419] Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance,* 89.
[420] Johannes Von Moltke, *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 2005) 82.

Smaragdstrasse mark the former western and eastern border of the camp, while the pathway between the northern border and the SS area has been replaced with *Opalstrasse* and its extension. Similarly, in the approximate area of the former entrance to the Allach camp, a building complex features two gate-like entrance ways, thereby mirroring the structures which were in place during the operation of the camp.[421]

The most prominent remaining structure is the single stone barracks, which was built in the summer 1944 in the area of the OT camp Karlsfeld. This building underwent a considerable change in the 1950s, when on the northern side of the barracks, a large additional building was added to function as a canteen for the federal emigration camp. The original part of the barracks continued to be used as a washing facility. During the 1950s, the extension was used for movie screening as well as for dances, while the barracks was used by the local soccer club. The barracks has been placed under heritage protection since 2007.[422]

An additional smaller structure which remains form the era of the camp's operation is a transformer building, which is located on *Kristallstrasse*, in the area of the SS barracks. It supplied the power for the electric fence and continues to be used to provide electricity.

The so-called 'roller-skating slab,' the foundation of one of the former wooden barracks of the camp, is located in one of the green spaces which separate the houses in the Ludwigsfeld. A ping-pong table and benches are located respective on and on the side of the slab, and during local festivities, the area is used for a tent.

The remains of a concrete bridge which crosses the *Schwabenbaechl* [a small creek which cuts through Ludwigsfeld] can be found on each bank of the stream. From spring 1944 onward, prisoners marched from the camp to the BMW plant across this bridge.

The foundations of a former guard building of the SS resurfaced during the development of a parking area next to the Russian-Orthodox chapel. In the same area are also strip foundations of the former delousing barracks. Similarly, structural remains and foundations were discovered during the archaeological excavations in 2016 and 2017.[423]

While these remaining structures have become part of the topography of the Ludwigsfeld and in the every-day live of the residents, they nevertheless carry a mnemonic aura for some local individuals, as is illustrated by a description provided by Mrs. Anusch Thiel, who has lived in the settlement since its creation:

> "we had a window with a view onto the roller skating slab. During a visit, Max Mannheimer saw the roller-skating slab from our window and said '*Gutes neues Leben auf diesem blutigen Boden. So soll es sein. Macht weiter so*.'" [Good new life on this bloody soil. This is how it should be. Keep going. – my translation][424]

Anusch is convinced that "it was made a condition" to leave the slab in place, so that a few things from the camp remain in place. While it is difficult to imagine who might have made such a provision and for what purpose, the fact remains that the roller skate slab appears out of place as it is situated in the middle of one of the green spaces between the houses and does not serve any specific purpose.

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[421] I am indebted for this information to Klaus Mai, who drew my attention to the specific location of this structure during a walk-about in the settlement during the fall of 2018.
[422] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 45.
[423] *Ibid*., p. 47.
[424] Interview, Anusch Thiel, Ludwigsfeld, November 2018.

The atmosphere within this artificially constructed community changed only very gradually, and mainly as a result of the children's interactions. While there was no open aggression between the adults, specific social groups continued to avoid each other, and specific markers, such as nationality, religion, occupation, and economical aspects continued to privilege some groups over others.[425] In addition to the *heimatlose Auslaender*, several German families from the former federal camp Ludwigsfeld also sought a new home in the Ludwigsfeld. As the 690 new apartments were made available, the management of the nearby BMW plant as well as these German families were concerned that the DPs would receive greater privileges.[426] The BMW works council subsequently intervened on behalf of the German families, who continued to have employment connections with BMW, and it was finally established that 200 apartments would be assigned to German refugees and expellees and a total of 114 for BMW employees. These German families perpetuated the social distance between Germans and foreigners in that they settled exclusively in a number of blocks along *Kristallstrasse*.

As the generation of the adults was gradually replaced by the children, a social cohesion began to emerge in the settlement, which was further supported by the specific purpose of the housing project: parents who had signed rental agreements were able to pass these on to their children, so that the population largely remained the same. At the same time, the apartments were rather basic by modern standards, in that they did not have bathrooms, central heating, or hot water, and were thereby not particularly desirable in the general Munich rental market. The emerging social cohesion was also reflected in the establishment of social and cultural initiatives, such as a theater group, which was established in 1986 under the name Theater International Ludwigsfeld e.V. In 2003, the name changed to *Kulturgemeinschaft* Ludwigsfeld e.V. (KUGEL) [cultural association Ludwigsfeld] in order to create a more effective platform for all culturally active groups in the Ludwigsfeld, as well as to support individual artists.[427] Cultural groups and activities in the Ludwigsfeld date back to the founding of the settlement, and include various theater and music groups, as well as artists.[428]

5. Local discourses of commemoration initiated by residents

The history of the subcamp complex Allach was never forgotten, at least by the local residents, many of whom were former prisoners. But a broader public interest in the site only emerged since the 2000s. First initiatives to commemorate the victims and to document the history of the site began soon after the liberation. First testimony from former prisoners were published as early as 1946 and 1947.[429] Specifically in France emerged the commemoration of the Allach subcamp by former French prisoners; for example, Marcel G. Riviere, a co-founder of the

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[425] *Ibid*.
[426] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 32; Mai, *60 Jahre Neue Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*, 41; Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten*, 29.
[427] "*Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*," *KuGeL e.V.*, http://www.siedlung-ludwigsfeld.de/unseresozialeneinrichtungen/kugelkulturgemeinschaft/index.html Accessed August 1, 2020.
[428] "*Kugel e.V. Satzung*," *KuGeL e.V.*, https://www.kugel1986ev.com/news/kugel-e-v-satzung Accessed August 1, 2020.
[429] Karl Adolf Gross, *Zweitausend Tage Dachau : Berichte und Tagebuecher des Haeftlings Nr. 16921* (Molino Verlag GmbH, 2020); Riemer, *Sturz in Dunkel*; Karl Wagner: *Ich schlage nicht: Beitrag zur Geschichte des antifaschistischen Widerstandes 1943 im KZ-Aussenlager Dachau-Allach (*Karlsruhe, 1980).

Comite national francais, wrote a report about the camp.[430] In the late 1970s, with the broadcast of the American TV series Holocaust, increasing efforts were made to commemorate the victims of the Nazi regime. In the book *Amicale des Anciens de Dachau* over 30 former prisoners published their personal experiences of the camp.[431] This collection became the starting point for future historical research, which was subsequently published in the *Dachauer Hefte.*[432] In the second issue of this publication, an article about the forced labour for BMW was published.[433] However, it was not until the 1990s when the vast topic of forced labour emerged as a distinct field in historical research on the Nazi era. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the settlement, local residents created a brochure, which contained a brief note about the camp.[434] Upon the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the camp, an issue was produced by the local *Geschichtswerkstatt*. In preparation for an exhibition on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the settlement in 2013, more interest began to emerge also from the memorial site Dachau as well as from the city of Munich, to revisit this dark history.

The *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau [camp association Dachau] was founded in 1946 by (primarily German polidtical) survivors of the camp. Because of the close relationship between the main camp Dachau and its subcamp Allach, the memory of the Allach site was also a concern for the association, and its chair Max Mannheimer, also a former prisoner of Allach, invested himself in efforts toward a public commemoration of the site. It was due to initiative by Max Mannheimer and local residents that in 1997 the commemorative plaques were mounted on the single remaining barracks. Since Mr. Mai's engagement in keeping the memory of the former camp alive, regular commemorative events take place at the barracks.

6. The *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld today: colliding needs and plans

An important point for social events became the extension, which had been added to the gable end of the former sanitation barracks: approximately a year after the closure of the former federal emigration camp, the building was leased to a Munich brewery, with a separate room which was used for social events. While the events eventually ceased, the restaurant/pub existed at least until 2009, although Mr. Johannes Thiel indicates that the business closed upon the sale of the settlement in 2007.[435] The closure of the establishment impacted the social structure in the Ludwigsfeld negatively, in that it removed the much-needed meeting place for social get-togethers. As a result, a local initiative seeks to re-create what is envisioned as a space for social interactions, but also to foster arts and culture, such as theater performances or cultural groups, specific to the Ludwigsfeld. In addition, a separate room could house a small exhibition in which the history of the site as a camp could be made accessible.[436] Specifically the KuGeL e.V. has been active and engaged to obtain support, approval and funding. At this point, aside from a

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[430] *Gedenkstaette* Dachau Archiv, *Erlebnisbericht von Marcel-G. Riviere La fin d'un camp comme les autres*, o.D. 1965, StAnw Muenchen 34817, accessed fall 2018.
[431] Amicale des Anciens de Dachau (Hg.): Allach. Kommando de Dachau. 1. Aufl. 1982, 2. Aufl. Paris 1985. Weitere Zeitzeugenberichte folgten in den 1990er Jahren, z.B.: Sanguedolce, Joseph: La résistance à Dachau-Allach. Contre la mort programmée.
[432] Zdenek, *Allach – Sklaven für BM*W, 68–78.
[433] *Ibid.*
[434] Thiel, Anusch u. Johannes (Hgg.): *40 Jahre Siedlung Ludwigsfeld 1953 – 1993*. O.O. (München, 1993).
[435] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 43; Interview, Johannes Thiel, Ludwigsfeld, November 2018.
[436] The sponsorship should be carried by the proprietor or the city of Munich, while KuGeL e.V. or the local Caritas could be responsible for the operations, Interview Anusch Thiel and Johannes Thiel, Ludwigsfeld, November 2018.

youth and senior meeting space, no other space is available to accommodate casual or organized get-togethers.

In spite of a number of developments in the settlement – in 1997 - 1998, inexpensive condominiums for low-income families were created by the Munich developer and builder CONCEPT BAU GmbH, and in 1999 – 2000 the same company created 48 rowhouses, the overall structure of the Ludwigsfeld did not change, and maintained its isolated, rural character.[437] Yet, from the turn of the century onward, radical changes for the social and material cohesion of the Ludwigsfeld began to emerge, in response to and in the context of decisions and needs of the greater Munich area.

Arguably, the starting point of this change is marked by the sale of the federally owned apartments to a private real estate developer. The federal control and management of the Ludwigsfeld ensured a stable rental structure, while, at the same time, ensuring a consistently low rent level – particularly in comparison to the high cost of rent in the city of Munich. The planned sale of the settlement caused considerable concern among its long-time residents, particularly with respect to the vulnerable economic status of considerable numbers of residents, which in many cases constitutes the cross-generational impact of the loss of their home and livelihood and the long-term impact of the abuse they suffered during the Nazi era.[438] Oljena Batowska, for example, was deported aged 17 from the Ukraine to the Allach subcamp complex, where she was forced to work in the armament production. At the age of 83, she was now concerned that she would lose her home.[439] Similarly, Stefania Dykowicz, who was deported from Galicia at 15, worried that she would not be able to absorb increases in her rent: Stefania paid 184 Euro/month in rent out of her modest pension of 530 Euro/month. The residents' concerns are understandable: in 2007, the average rental price per square metre for an apartment in the Ludwigsfeld was at 2.70 Euro, while the average square metre rental price in Munich was 11 Euro.[440]

In 2002, the city of Munich entered negotiations with the federal government but failed due to the price – the city offered 1.5 million Euro for the residences. The medium-sized local contractor Max Kerscher made an offer for the settlement of 8.5 million Euro. He promised to protect and maintain the social structure of the Ludwigsfeld and wave any turnover of the apartments from rental units to condominiums. Kerscher also offered to yield any short-term returns.[441] Yet, although the Ludwigsfeld's residents felt that Kerscher would best represent their interests, the sale was finally settled in June 2007 with the private real estate developer Patrizia A.G. for 10.5 million Euro. Munich's mayor Christian Ude appealed to finance minister Peer Steinbrueck to ensure that the social structure of the settlement would be maintained and protected, and while Steinbrueck expressed that decisions regarding the buyer would not be based on the highest offer, clearly the sale nevertheless went to the highest bidder. In a response to an inquiry to deputies regarding the sale of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld, dated May 10th 2007, the German government stated that from a federal perspective, the maintenance of the settlement was uneconomical, and that it was obligated to sell the properties form their holdings

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[437] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 35; Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten*, 20.
[438] "*Hinweis in eigener Sache*," *Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*, http://www.siedlung-ludwigsfeld.de/hinweisineigenersache/leserbriefe/irenejazenko22092008/index.html Accessed August 1, 2020.
[439] Georg Ettscheit, "*Die Bedrohung der zweiten Heimat*," 03.09.2007, *TAZ*, https://taz.de/!240950 Accessed August 1, 2020.
[440] *Ibid.*
[441] *Ibid*.

for their full value, as determined by the market and guidelines of the federal government.[442] With respect to the concerns of local residents about increases in rental costs or termination of rental agreements, the note stated that the buyer's offer contained elements which were aimed to protect the settlement against a rapid turnover; guaranteed a continuation and life-long protection of existing rental agreements; protection against termination; as well as a guarantee that the turnover of rental apartments into purchasable property only after 15 years.[443]

Yet, in November 2007, the company's manager Gerhard Faltermeier stated that in view of the planned 18 million Euro investment into the renovation of the residences, residents needed to be prepared for increases in rent: for example, prior to renovation, a 43 square metre apartment in the Ludwigsfeld cost 113 Euro/month; after the renovation the rent for the same apartment would increase to 198 or even 256 Euro, which, in comparison with the Munich housing market was still modest.[444] Through the sale of the settlement, thus, the community encountered for the first time the general market economy. Irene Jazenko, a representative of the *Interessengemeinschaft* Ludwigsfeld (IGLU) [community of interests Ludwigsfeld,] expressed her concern that some things might have not been quite right with the deal, pointing specifically to the considerable discrepancy between the offer of the city of Munich and the actual sale price of 10.5 million Euro.[445]

A press notice which was released in June 2007, gives insight into the perception of the deal from the perspective of the residents of the Ludwigsfeld [my translation]:

> "Victory of commerce over social and historical responsibility!
>
> With their decision to sell, those responsible have created the foundation for a legal and irretrievable destruction of a cross-generational community of residents. They also accepted, that the local social peace may possibly falter. Furthermore, they allowed that affordable rental space in Munich will be lost over time, although an ideal alternative existed.
>
> Munich's mayor and finance minister praise with almost intolerable euphoria the achievements for the tenants. Actually, this was only due to the specific social provisions by the bidder Herr Kerscher, that the settlement had not already been sold under much worse conditions for the tenants to the always preferred Patrizia AG. It is unbelievable for those concerned, that the federal government ignored a bidder with such considerable guarantees for the tenants. The offer of Herr Kerscher was only marginally below the highest offer of Patrizia AG, and he had indicated a willingness for further negotiatons. Unfortunately, the federal government did not engage – why?
>
> Incomprehensible!

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[442] Between 1997 to 2000, the federal government invested 350,000 Euro annually into building maintenance and between 2001 to 2006 around 2.1 million Euro. See: "*Antwort der Bundesregierungauf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten* Kornelia Möller, Eva Bulling-Schröter, Klaus Ernst, Oskar Lafontaine und der *Fraktion DIE LINKE*,"– Drucksache 16/5077 –*Siedlung Ludwigsfeld München*) – *Verkauf bundeseigener Immobilienund Liegenschaften in Bayern Drucksache* 16/5306, 10. 05. 2007, http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/16/053/1605306.pdf Accessed August 1, 2020.

[443] *Ibid*.

[444] Uli Scherr, "*Siedlung Ludwigsfeld wird für Millionen saniert*," 22.11.2007, *Welt*, https://www.welt.de/regionales/muenchen/article1388524/Siedlung-Ludwigsfeld-wird-fuer-Millionen-saniert.html Accessed July 25, 2021.

[445] Ettscheit, "*Die Bedrohung der zweiten Heimat."*

> Known personalities also suggested to pay attention to the offer which would be socially most acceptable, due to the historical and social significance of the Ludwigsfeld. This unique community should be preserved permanently, but they also were not heard. Why?
>
> Where are the societal values which the federal government should represent by example, where is the support for the people in the Ludwigsfeld which mayor Ude has promised for years? Where is the responsibility for the socially weaker members of society? The Ludwigsfeld is very disappointed!
>
> Many open questions remain!
>
> Are the promises legally significant? Who feels truly responsible and guarantees the implementation of the contract or ensures?? Would the federal government be the held responsible for contractual violations? Will people lose their home? Will the protective bond of families and neighbours be lost in the future? Will old and weak people no longer be supported? What about the social, religious and cultural organization? Will social peace collapse?
>
> Horror, incomprehension and anger currently inform the situation in the Ludwigsfeld!"[446]

This note clearly reflects the sense of betrayal and exclusion the residents of the Ludwigsfeld felt with respect to the decision-making about the future of their settlement, homes and lives. Not surprisingly, after the renovations were completed, renters reported a rise in rent, which increased the cost from the previous 2.61 Euro per square metre to 5.50 Euro/square metre for existing tenants, and 10 Euro/square metre for new tenants.[447]

Unexpectedly in 2017, the Patrizia AG sold the settlement to the *Wohnungsgesellschaft* Ludwigsfeld mbH. This housing company is owned by three private individuals: Gert Billand, investment manager, and Stefan Heisserer, managing director of First Capital Partner, the asset management company of the founder of Patrizia AG; Wolfgang Egger, founder and CEO of Patrizia AG, and Alfred Hoschek, deputy chairman supervisory board of Patrizia AG, and managing director at Aho *Verwaltungs* GmbH, which manages assets, purchase and sale as well as leasing of real estate.[448] The *Wohnungsgesellschaft* Ludwigsfeld mbH is thus closely connected with the Patrizia AG, and the investors now own all apartment buildings of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld from 1952/53, as well as a part of the area of the camp's expansion from 1944, and two lots on which the remaining barracks is located.[449] The company did not provide any

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[446] "*Unsere social Einrichtungen*," *Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*, http://www.siedlung-ludwigsfeld.de/unseresozialeneinrichtungen/igluinteressengemeinschaft/pressemitteilungjuni2007/index.html Accessed July 25, , 2020.

[447] *Der Spiegel*, "*Steinbrück verkaufte Siedlung für ehemalige Zwangsarbeiter und Heimatvertriebene zum Höchstgebot*, " 20.01.2013, https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/vorab/steinbrueck-verkaufte-siedlung-fuer-heimatvertriebene-zum-hoechstgebot-a-878555.html Accessed July 24, 2020; "*Antwort der Bundesregierung*," http://dipbt.bundestag.de/doc/btd/16/053/1605306.pdf Accessed August 1, 2020.

[448] Simon Schramm, "*Raetselraten ueber die Zukunft*," 25.02.2018, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/dachau/siedlung-ludwigsfeld-raetselraten-ueber-die-zukunft-1.3882658, Accessed July 24, 2020.

[449] The average rental increase per square metre in Munich between 2007 and 2017 was 35.7%. See "Mietpreise -nd Kaufpresie," *ImmoScout*, https://www.immobilienscout24.de/immobilienbewertung/ratgeber/mietpreise-und-kaufpreise/mietspiegel/mietspiegel-muenchen.html Accessed July 23, 2020; "*Wohnungsmarkpreise innerhalb von zehn Jahren fast verdoppelt,*" *Haufe*, https://www.haufe.de/immobilien/entwicklung-vermarktung/marktanalysen/wohnungsmarkt-preise-innerhalb-von-zehn-jahren-fast-verdoppelt_84324_423272.html Accessed July 23, 2020.

reasons for the sale; however, Gert Billand states that the settlement was purchased as an investment, but did not offer reasons for the investment.[450] Understandably, the residents in the Ludwigsfeld are – again – deeply concerned about the future plans of the owners.

In the meantime, the eastern part of the former OT camp Karlsfeld was purchased by the *Projektgesellschaft Granatstrasse* 12 [project company *Granatstrasse* 12] in 2015. The *Projektgesellschaft Granatstrasse* 12 represents the Hirmer group, Muenchen, a mens' and boys' clothing store. The Hirmer group originated with the company Bamberger and Hertz, a Jewish family-owned company chain run by five brothers, who expanded their father's store.[451] The family's stores suffered – as all Jewish businesses did – after the rise to power of the Nazi party and had to be either 'aryanized' or closed, while two of the brothers were deported to the concentration camp Buchenwald. Hans Hirmer, who worked as a salesman in the Munich branch, which was owned by Siegfried Bamberger, moved up to head of purchasing, and in 1938, in the context of anti-Jewish actions, Hirmer bought the business from its original owner.[452] Siegfried, who had fled to the United States of America, was the only brother who survived the Holocaust. After the war, Hirmer offered to return the store to Bamberger, but because Bamberger did not want to return to Munich, an agreement was reached for a joint start-up of the company Hirmer and Co, and by 1952, the family Hirmer purchased the shares of the family Bamberger.[453] Today, the Hirmer Group includes, in addition to the main store in Munich, several branches in Germany and Austria, real estate projects, and several hotels and resorts.

In the late 1960s/early 1970s, the remaining barracks in the area of the former OT camp Karlsfeld were torn down, and the remaining cinder blocks were simply left on site or tossed into trenches. The site was subsequently used by a nursery, which changed the ground substantially in some areas. Through unapproved subletting, the area eventually became a junk yard, repair shop, and was used for illegal container storage and during this time, large areas were sealed with asphalt.[454] By 2015, the local resident Ewgenij Repnikov alerted the city of Munich of this illegal usage of the site, and Klaus Mai expressed concern over the potential of mass graves in the vicinity. At this point in time, the *Projektgesellschaft Granatstrasse* 12 had already purchased the land, and was in the planning phase for a development project. Due to the history of the site, planning came to a complete stop, and in addition, the city prohibited the current occupant from further misappropriation and began to clear the area. The new property owner agreed to an in-depth archaeological excavation of the site, and in this context, the city of Munich established a round-table which included various interested parties and stakeholders, under the leadership of Winfried Nerdinger, the former director of Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism.[455] Due to the increase in public attention, specifically in view of the large-scale archaeological excavations during which 12 human skeletal remains were discovered, it became necessary for local agencies, organizations, and institutions to consider the historical context of the site. While all involved parties are in agreement, that it is necessary to provide more in-depth

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[450] Schramm, "*Raetselraten ueber die Zukunft*."
[451] "*Ueber uns*," *Hirmer Gruppe*, https://ww.hirmer-gruppe.de/ueber-uns/geschichte Accessed August 3, 2020; "*Von Bamberger & Hertz zu Hirmer – Ein respektables Stueck Wirtschaftsgeschichte," Hirmer Gruppe website*, https://www.hirmer-gruppe.de/download/presse/pressemappe/hirmer_gruppe_geschichte.pdf Accessed August 3, 2020.
[452] "*Boykott-Aktion am Geschaeftshaus Bamberger & Hertz," Juedisches Museum* Berlin, Samstag 1. April 1933, https://www.jmberlin.de/1933/2013/04/01/boykottaktion-am-geschaftshaus-bamberger-hertz/ Accessed August 3, 2020.
[453] "*Ueber uns*," *Hirmer Gruppe.*
[454] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*, 70.
[455] *Ibid*.

information about the history of the site, as well as to commemorate the victims in a more formal framework, none of the stakeholders has so far taken the initiative. It was in this context, that a feasibility study was carried out to examine all aspects which are relevant for the development of a memorial project with the consensus of all interested parties. The specific circumstances within which the study was carried out, as well as its aftermath will be discussed in another chapter of this dissertation.

After the completion of the archaeological excavations, the table was cleared to revisit the future development of the site, and Munich mayor Dieter Reiter announced in February 2017 that new urban development measures in the north of Munich are on the horizon. The land price in the 900 hectare area have been frozen, to enable the city to project future development. Such development could potentially benefit the Ludwigsfeld as it would become annexed to the greater Munich area and infrastructure; however, it would also change the currently insular character of the settlement. At the same time, the stipulation of withholding a turnover of the rental units into purchasable property will be lifted in 2022, and it is unclear if and how the housing company will take advantage of this change.[456]

As the planning for development projects in and around the Ludwigsfeld solidify, the concern and mistrust among the local population toward the city of Munich as well as the other property owners increases. The decision of the committee for urban planning and building regulations of the city of Munich from July 3rd 2019, which highlights in which areas what type of usage is being considered, was met with skepticism:[457] While the plan indicates, that any future development in the area will be balanced, integrated and future-oriented, and that existing features such as trees, biotopes will be considered in the planning, residents are less concerned with actual plans for development, but rather with the size and shape: plans suggest that the number of local residents could potentially increase from 1,660 to 5,000 as the settlement balloons from its original 660 units to 2100 apartments, with about 700 affordable condominiums in buildings up to eight stories high. Developers point out that the overall living situation in the Ludwigsfeld would be substantially improved through the creation of social facilities, educational and sports infrastructure, as well as walking and cycling trails, an expansion of roads and additional parking spaces, but in order to provide this improved infrastructure, the expansion of the settlement is a must. At the same time, the property owners state that in the 660 apartments of the actual Ludwigsfeld only 130 individuals ranging between first to fourth generation remain of the original residents, and furthermore, that in view of investment of 23 million Euro since 2008 into considerable renovations and modernizations of the living spaces, including the addition of balconies and patios, at the current rental prices, the situation was simply not economically feasible.[458] And while the city argues that it is interested in the input of the local population, residents of the Ludwigsfeld point out that their requests for improvements of their community have been known to the city for years, and that specific questions regarding numbers and volume have so far not been answered. Residents of the Ludwigsfeld do not believe the assurances of the city and developers and propose instead that any substantial development should only take place once the other

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[456] Schramm, "*Raetselraten ueber die Zukunft*."
[457] "*Referat für Stadtplanung und Bauordnung Stadtentwicklungsplanung PLAN-HA I / 43 Siedlung Ludwigsfeld-Grundsatzbeschluss -A) Strukturuntersuchung Siedlung Ludwigsfeld B) Empfehlung für das weitere Vorgehen Sitzungsvorlagen*, Nr. 14 - 20 / V 1468," *RIS Muenchen*, https://www.ris-muenchen.de/RII/RII/DOK/SITZUNGSVORLAGE/5530651.pdf Accessed August 3, 2020.
[458] *Ibid*.

significant challenges of the settlement have been addressed.[459]

The existing tension between the local residents and the owners of the area were further increased, when in January 2020, under the direction of the *Wohnungsgesellschaft* Ludwigsfeld, a 5,000 square metre wooded area on the periphery of the settlement was almost fully deforested, including several old trees. According to the owners, the trees were removed because they were diseased, but the plan to cut down the trees was not communicated to the residents.[460]

7. Identity formation in response to exclusionary practices

No social cohesion existed in the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld during the early years of the settlement. Literature suggests that individuals from between 22 to 30 different nations[461] lived in the new settlement, and even though they shared a common space, considerable linguistic, political, national and religious divides existed between social groups, which were often based on pre-war and war-time alliances and status as well as social capital. Social cohesion was further undermined through former perpetrator-victim relationships, which created mistrust and fear: not only did some of the residents know each other from the NS era, but some of the residents were former SS members.[462] Yet, out of a past of persecution and discrimination, and a socio-culturally, politically, religiously, linguistically and economically diverse hodgepodge of persons emerged an unexpectedly tolerant and inclusive community. While spatial and social segregation of specific populations in post-war Germany were wide-spread and the evolution of the site of the former Allach subcamp complex was by no means exceptional, the contemporary Ludwigsfeld is noteworthy as a singular material and social palimpsest. It is the particular constellation of outside perceptions vis-à-vis the highly heterogenous and at times antagonistic community within the settlement, which eventually gave rise to a specific identity and social cohesion. Chasms between different social groups gradually diminished as a result of the social engagement and interactions of the numerous children. Mrs. Thiel describes: "Our inner connection stems from our secluded, manageable world of few streets. And no group, no religion is dominant." Mrs. Thiel further notes "also, the feeling to not be wanted further molds people together." Her husband Johannes Thiel adds that "Munich has done nothing for us for over 60 years. We were left to ourselves, isolated, almost forgotten. It is a shame, that the city never accepted the responsibility toward us."[463] The statements of Mr. and Mrs. Thiel reveal the boomerang effect of identity formation, in which a highly heterogenous group with no shared identity develops a homogeneous identity in response to the perceptions of the outside community.

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[459] Jerzy Sobotta, "*Geballtes Misstrauen*," 19.09.2019 *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/dachau/ludwigsfeld-karlsfeld-geballtes-misstrauen-1.4608256?reduced=true Accessed August 4, 2020; Thomas Kronewitter, "*Weg frei fuer ersehnten Ausbau,"* 12.1.2020, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/siedlung-ludwigsfeld-weg-frei-fuer-ersehnten-ausbau-1.4753801 Accessed August 4, 2020.

[460] Eva von Steinburg, "N*ach Rodungen noch weniger Gruen im Muenchner Norden*," 31.12.2019, *Abendzeitung Muenchen* https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/inhalt.aufregung-in-ludwigsfeld-nach-rodungen-noch-weniger-gruen-im-muenchner-norden.43f0adb0-6dab-48a4-9fd2-31a46adb9068.html, Accessed August 4, 2020.

[461] FranKonzept names 30 different nations (2018, 31), Repnikov suggests 22 nations, (https://www.kugel1986ev.com/news/gedenktafel/ Accessed August 3, 2020), and Mai notes 25 nations (2013, 43). 3

[462] Mai 2013.

[463] Interview, Anusch und Johannes Thiel, Ludwigsfeld, November 2018.

Singh Bolaria and Sean Hier note that "[t]he strengthening of local identities can be seen in the strong defensive reaction of those members of dominant ethnic groups who feel threatened by the presence of other cultures."[464] The rejection of the Ludwigsfeld by the surrounding German communities and the city of Munich can thus be perceived as a response of a dominant ethnic group against the presence of other cultures, and the isolated locality of the settlement is both a manifestation of this response, and at the same time, it also reinforced the separateness of the Ludwigsfeld residence from German society. At the same time, this form of response

> "is sometimes matched by a strategic retreat to more defensive identities amongst the minority communities themselves in response to the experience of cultural racism and exclusion. Such strategies include re-identification with cultures of origin […] the construction of strong counter-ethnicities […] the revival of cultural traditionalism, religious orthodoxy and political separatism […]"[465]

Indeed, the very system according to which persons were ascribed the status 'displaced person,' which was based on nationality, facilitated nationalism, and in the case of Jewish DPs, Zionist loyalties.[466] The development of a collective identity, as well as a re-identification with cultures of origin are both apparent in the Ludwigsfeld. On the one hand, residents of the Ludwigsfeld insist that the locals have formed a

> "solidarity community, already over four generations, in which a peaceful togetherness is a matter of course. Formerly a 'place of German shame," today, the Ludwigsfeld is a space of tolerance, peace and social cohesion. Ludwigsfeld became home!"[467]

At the same time, cultural differences continued to be fostered; for example, diverse religious denominations continued in the Ludwigsfeld. When the Ukrainian president Viktor Juschtschenko visited the settlement in 2007 (including the Ukrainian-Orthodox chapel), locals enthusiastically conversed with him in Ukrainian, and the locals celebrated the visit with a serenade.[468]

At the same time, the strong defensive reaction of the surrounding German community and larger society to DP camps generally, and to the Ludwigsfeld specifically, manifested in in specific strategies of 'othering' which point to broader colonial and racist ideologies in post-war Germany which have become socially accepted and are played down. Returning to Jensen's definition of 'othering,' the subordinate group of the *heimatlose Auslaender* was ascribed problematic and inferior characteristic, whereby at the same time, the dominant German population gained further in legitimacy and superiority.[469]

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[464] Bolaria Singh and Sean Patrick Hier, *Identity and Belonging: Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Canadian Society* (Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 2006), 264.
[465] *Ibid*.
[466] Tara Zahra, "Lost children: Displacement, family, and nation in postwar Europe," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 81, Iss. 1 (2009): 45 – 86, 50.
[467] "Unsere sozialen Einrichtungen," *Siedlung* Ludwigsfeld.
[468] Viktor Juschtschenko visited the Ludwigsfeld, as he was tracing his father's journey during a private visit to Germany. His father was in the concentration camp Flossenbuerg as well as in Allach. The parents of Juschtschenko's wife Katerina, lived prior to their emigration to the USA in the Ludwigsfeld. They also had been in German concentration camps. See "*Viktor Juschtschenko*," *Siedlung Ludwigsfeld*, http://www.siedlung-ludwigsfeld.de/aktuelles/viktorjuschtschenko/index.html Accessed August 4, 2020.
[469] Jensen, *Othering, identity formation and agency,* 65.

8. The *Mau-Mau Siedlung* – continuities of processes of 'othering' through spatial, social and linguistic segregation

In a newspaper article from January 2017, Mrs. Thiel stated that

> "it still happens now that parents don't come here for the children to play. Our settlement is taboo for them….we still have the reputation of an asocial Russian settlement ….and there is of course the history of the camp."[470]

The negative perceptions of the community as 'other' by the German population was already expressed during a closed session of the Munich city council on September 25th 1951, city councillor Mr. Blieninger made references to the frequency with which police had to interfere with "*Leute dieser Art*," [people of such sorts – my translation,] and that he expected the population of Munich to be resentful toward the creation of the new settlement Ludwigsfeld.[471] Mr. Blieninger furthermore was puzzled why the DPs did not wish to return to their home country, and proposed that the inclusion of "such people" would not create a desirable situation in Munich. On a similar note, when the necessity to create living spaces in view of the desperate need for housing was pointed out, city councillor Mr. Lallinger questioned "why all people have to come here to Munich?"[472]

As *heimatlose Auslaender*, the new residents in the Ludwigsfeld were unable to vote, and therefore of little political interest to the city of Munich, which, in combination with its isolated location, had considerable consequences for the locals in all areas of city planning, decision-making, distribution of resources and social support. For example, a bus connection to the neighboring suburb Feldmoching was only established in 2003, after many years of struggle.[473] The social and physical isolation of the new settlement was considered an advantage by German neighboring communities as well as the city of Munich, as, after all, the integration of those who settled here was never a goal of the development of the area. Through their enforced settlement in the area of the former subcamp complex, as well as through the all-encompassing term *heimatlose Auslaender,* a highly diverse group of people was thus homogenized into a social group with which they would otherwise not have identified.[474]

The naming of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld as well as the naming of its streets exemplifies how socio-political agendas and authorized versions of the past manifest spatially, and the street names as well as the name of the settlement should be considered and situated in the context of the country's and region's post-war struggles over interpretations of the past and perceptions of DPs. Through the purposeful designation 'new' with respect to the settlement's name, a clear break is established between the 'then' and the 'now,' both temporarily as well as spatially. The 'new' also serves to underline the break between the Germany of the Nazi era, and the political commitment of the new anti-fascist, democratic Germany.

The Munich city council named the streets of the new settlement based on precious gemstones; the motivation for this choice was that the names would be easily accessible to its

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[470] "*Gedenktafel*," *KuGeL e.V*.
[471] *Ibid*.
[472] *Ibid*., [my translation].
[473] Even now, the bus connection to the Ludwigsfeld is somewhat limited, especially with reduced hours on weekends, and holidays.
[474] Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten*, 40.

non-German speaking residents.[475] The significance of these naming-practices cannot be overestimated and signify what Maoz Azaryahu refers to as introducing an "authorized version of history into ordinary settings of everyday life."[476] It is particularly their seemingly innocuous, ordinary incorporation into the familiar context of every-day life that makes street names strategic elements in social and ideological discourses. It is precisely because street names are commonly not perceived as symbolic, that they "affect[s] the recipients in a soft manner" through their repetitive influence.[477] As Reuben Rose-Redwood has pointed out, street names are embedded into systems of meaning, assertion and reproduction of power, and identity creation. Rather than being simply signifiers of objective facts, the act of naming streets is an "'economy of practices' for marking geographic spaces as both a place of memory and erasure," and that the "practice of symbolic erasure [is] most evident in the act of street naming."[478] Furthermore, street naming functions as spatial representations of political commitments[479], a struggle over social and political identity[480], and dominant conceptions of the past in the public realm.[481] The naming of streets is the result of top-down administrative procedures, based on a on a system which is codified by the municipality,[482] and is a thereby a "political act, where the state manifests its authority and exclusive right to interpret its own history."[483] Azaryahu points specifically to the exclusionary dimension of street naming: through the very act of naming, a specific place is reconfigured in relation to the 'city text',[484] and 'public forgetting' is inscribed into the landscape itself.[485] Through the function of designating locations and offering spatial orientation, street names have the "capability to render the version of history they represent not only familiar on an everyday basis, but also seemingly self-evident."[486]

Similarly, by naming the streets after neutral precious gemstones, which do not make any references to the previous usage or occupants of the site, the city of Munich further confirms its exclusive right to interpret its own history. Through the seemingly harmless street names, a new version of history which is free of the dark past is established and naturalized. The naming of the settlement as well as the streets allowed for a new material production of the place and served

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[475] "*Strassengeschichte*," *Stadtgeschichte Muenchen*, 2.10.1952 - Stadtratsbeschluß Ludwigsfeld: „*Für die Straßenbenennungen im Regierungslager für heimatlose Ausländer werden für Ausländer leicht verständliche Namen von Edelmineralien verwendet*." (city council decision: For the street names in the government camp for homeless foreigners, easily understandable names of precious minerals are used for foreigners – my translation), https://stadtgeschichte-muenchen.de/strassen/strassen_geschichte.php Accessed August 5, 2020.

[476] Maoz Azaryah, "Renaming the past in post-Nazi Germany: insights into the politics of street naming in Mannheim and Potsdam," *Cultural geographies*, Vol. 19, Iss. (2012): 385-400, 312.

[477] Bartłomiej Różycki, "Renaming urban toponomy as a mean of redefining local identity: the case of street decommunization in Poland*," Open Political Science*, Vol. 1 (2018): 20–31, 22.

[478] Reuben Rose-Redwood, "From Number to Name: Symbolic Capital, Places of Memory, and the Politics of Street Renaming in New York City," *Social & Cultural Geography*, Vol. 9 (2008): 431–452, 433.

[479] *Ibid*., 432.

[480] Derek Alderman, "A street fit for a King: the naming places and commemoration in the American South," *Professional Geographer*, Vol. 52, Iss. 4 (2000): 672 – 684, 672.

[481] Karen Till, "Places of memory," in *Companion to Political Geography* ed. J. Agnew, K. Mitchell, and G. Toel (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2015), 289 – 301; Karen Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

[482] Brenda Yeoh, "Street names in colonial Singapore," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 82 (1992): 313 – 322.

[483] Stefan Meyer, "Dwie drogi do alei Stalina. Zmiany nazw ulic w Warszawie i Berlinie Wschodnim (1945-1950)", in *W połowie drogi. Warszawa między Paryżem a Kijowem*, ed. Jerzy Kochanowski (Warszawa: Trio 2006), cited in Różycki, "Renaming urban toponomy" 20.

[484] Azaryahu, "Renaming the past in post-Nazi Germany."

[485] Steven Hoelscher and Derek Alderman, "Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship," *Social &Cultural Geography,* Vol. 5 (2004): 347 – 355, 347.

[486] Azaryahu, "Renaming the past in post-Nazi Germany," 388.

simultaneously to establish boundaries and to ascribe an identity to the place.[487] In relation to the 'city text' of Munich, the choice of gemstones as street names stand out in that they do not follow the naming tradition of the surrounding communities. While it is not unusual to name the streets in a settlement or quarter based on, for instance, flora, fauna or minerals in the German context, street names in the neighbouring Karlsfeld oftentimes refer to nearby locations, such as Dachauer or Karlsfelder *Strasse*, to specific individuals or communities, such as Dr. Ernst Zimmermann Allee or *Bajuwarenstrasse* [which refer to specific persons or people,] or to historical usage or ownership, such as *Am Torfstick* or *Auf den Schrederwiesen*. The use of precious gemstones as street names thus reveals a carefully chosen neutral point of reference, which is not in tradition with local customs, and provides not only a clear break with the recent past but also sets the settlement apart from the surrounding communities. That the new settlement was indeed perceived as its own entity, rather than a part of nearby communities, is further exemplified by outside perceptions and interpretations of the place as well as its residents.[488]

In addition to the manifestations of segregation in its location and naming, the negative perceptions of the new settlement and its residents, and the creation of a collective identity ascribed from the surrounding German population soon found expression in derogatory names. This process of labelling is, on the one hand, an expression of the perceived inferiority of the Ludwigsfeld residents, as well as a replication of the colonial gaze which perceives the Other as exotic.[489] The settlement was (and continues to be) commonly referred to as the *Mau-Mau Siedlung* as well as *Kristallsiedlung* (albeit this term also carries specific connotations, it is not as negative as *Mau-Mau Siedlung*).[490] The term *Mau-Mau Siedlung* was commonly used by the German population for settlements in post-war Germany, whose residents were largely refugees, expellees and DPs. While the term '*Mau-Mau'* refers specifically to the anti-colonial independence movement in Kenya between 1952 and 1960, the particular colonial African context of this term deserves closer examination, as it bears unsettling historical parallels and establishes a link between the colonialization of Africa, racial ideologies in Nazi Germany, and the unquestioned and widely accepted use of discriminatory language in post-war Germany.

The *Mau-Mau* war, in which the local *Kikuyu* population fought against European settlers and the colonial administration by Great Britain, assumed the characteristics of a civil war, with rifts between settlers and locals, as well as between African communities. In order to quell the uprising, the British colonial authorities established internment camps. Due to the catastrophic conditions of these camps, where over 80,000 persons were incarcerated, these camps have been

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[487] Rose-Redwood, "From Number to Name," 433.

[488] The *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld is also frequently referred to as the *Kristallsiedlung* (crystal settlement), or less glamorously, as *Glasscherbenviertel* (broken glass district). Perhaps non-German speakers may recognize the resonance with the term "Kristallnacht" - crystal night – which is also referred to as "the Night of Broken Glass." *Kristallnacht* refers to the pogrom against Jewish citizens, carried out by SA paramilitary forces throughout Nazi Germany, Austria and the Sudetenland on the night of November 9th to 10th 1938. The name appears to describe the shards of the smashed windows of Jewish stores, homes and synagogues, and has arguably an innocent, perhaps even romantic connotation to it, which belies the terror and damage inflicted onto Jewish citizens: 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and imprisoned in German concentration camps, and it is estimated that around 1,400 individuals died. The term crystal night, thus, represents yet another example of the Nazi's euphemistic use of language intended to obscure the genocide, such as *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment), *Umsiedlung* (resettlement) and *Endloesung* (final solution). The euphemistic terms *Kristallnacht* and *Kristallsiedlung* serve to disguise the underlying realities of persecution and exclusion.

[489] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin Books, 1995).

[490] FranKonzept, *Machbarkeitsstudie*; Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten.*

described as "British gulags,"[491] and a Nairobi judge referred to them as "Kenya's Belsen."[492]

The *Mau-Mau* conflict received considerable attention particularly in the news media in the Western world, which reinforced the racist perceptions of the African locals: photographs depicted the Africans as primitive destructive terrorists, who demonstrated their lack of civilization in gruesome sacrifices and brutal murders. This stereotypical perception of a foreign population finds, of course, markable parallels in the racial ideologies of the Nazi era. To refer to DP settlements in post-war Germany as *Mau-Mau Siedlungen* ascribes similar traits to the residents, which was further enhanced by the often-impoverished circumstances of the population. The negative perceptions of a *Mau-Mau* settlement in Willich, near Moenchen-gladbach, are illustrated by a resident, who remembers that "we were not welcome," [my translation] but explains this sentiment with a reference to the poverty of the population: "the people here also didn't have much," thereby implying that the lower economic status of the residents made them suspicious in the eyes of their German neighbours.[493]

The use of language informed by colonial racial ideologies in post-war Germany necessitates a closer examination due to the specific discourses of racism in Europe, which "allows European societies to continue to construct a self-image that displaces racism onto other geographical contexts or isolates it as a purely historical phenomenon."[494] In the context of European discourses of racism, Germany assumes arguably a very particular role, due to its history of National Socialism: Daniel Gyamerah states that

> "[b]ecause of National Socialism and the unfathomable responsibility of the entire society, in relation to Nazism and what our forefathers did, it often means that the consequences of German colonialism are neglected"

and further suggests that

> "[t]he focus is on National Socialism because the collective responsibility there is so big that it's difficult for society to recognize other events in German history. Colonialism and anti-black racism have no place in the country's public discourse."[495]

The 're-education' of Germans which occurred after the Second World War, with its emphasis on the persecution of the Jews and the magnitude of the Holocaust thereby allowed other racial ideologies to survive unquestioned. In the context of European national and colonial projects, the construction of race was an integral aspect, as it produced 'the Other' in opposition to European

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[491] Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya*, (Pimlico, 2005).

[492] *The Guardian*, "*Mau Mau abuse case: Time to say sorry,"* April 11, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/apr/11/mau-mau-empire-british-government-responsibility Accessed August 1, 2020; Kenya's colonial history includes also the establishment of a German protectorate, which was subsequently assumed by British colonial administration. German colonialism had devastating consequences for the local population: following the British example of South Africa, the Germans created holding camps. From these camps, the prisoners were either rented out to local businesses or forced to work on infrastructure projects, and due to the work and living conditions, many of the inmates perished. The historian Horst Drechsler argued that the German conflict with the local population falls into the category of genocide, in that 75% of the Herero and 50% of the Nama population were killed.

[493] Rudolf Barnholt, *"Mau-Mau Siedlung" wird 60*," 28.4.2014, *Westdeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.wz.de/nrw/kreis-viersen/willich-und-toenisvorst/mau-mau-siedlung-wird-60_aid-29586099 Accessed August 5, 2020; a similar reference to the era of German colonialism in Africa is the common phrase "*wie die Hottentotten*," (just like the Hottentots – my translation), a statement which I frequently heard as a child from my parents with respect to my disorderliness.

[494] Sara Salem, Vanessa Thompson, "Old racisms, New masks: On the Continuing Discontinuities of Racism and the Erasure of Race in European Contexts," *Nineteen sixty nine: an ethnic studies journal*, Vol. 3, Iss. 1 (2016): 1 – 23, 2.

[495] Daniel Gyamerah is the spokesperson of Each One Teach One e.V. He is leading the organization from being a small, voluntary-based organization toward becoming a central actor of empowering the African descendent community in Germany. See Chiponda Chimbelu, "What is life really like for black people in Germany?" 25.4.2020, Deutsche Welle, https://www.dw.com/en/whats-life-really-like-for-black-people-in-germany/a-53159443 Accessed August 10, 2020.

culture and thereby justified European colonialism.[496] Racial discrimination was naturalized and taken for granted in many different nations, and found expression in diverse manifestations, ranging from spatial segregation to the use of racially informed commercials and language. Through the use of colonial language embedded into daily context, racial categories continue to reproduce perceptions as well as experiences. By examining the interplay between language and race, we can understand how the idea of difference continues to be reproduced in post-colonial relations. Through the usage of seemingly benign manifestations of racial colonial perceptions, such as in advertising, product names, as well as in names, such as *Mau-Mau Siedlung* in reference to the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld. The legacy of such naturalized and unquestioned language continues into the present, which illustrates that the connection between language and racism fails to be perceived; for example, Vepřek references the use of the term *Mau-Mau Siedlung* by a taxi driver as well as by residents in neighbouring communities.[497] Similarly, several Munich newspapers use the term *Mau-Mau Siedlung* in their articles about an exhibit about the history of the *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld, yet, without providing any further context or explanation regarding the use of this name, thereby contributing to the unquestioned and naturalized incorporation of colonial racial categories and perceptions.[498] Schilling has pointed to the positive and heroic interpretation of colonial memory during Nazi Germany:

> "[t]he treatment of German colonialism in contemporary schoolbooks […] shows how the Nazi sought to engrave the memory of this period in young minds and to have it serve their own aims for empire. The former colonies were reinterpreted as a site for building pioneer spirit, engaging in legitimated violence and ingraining a sense of heroism and racial superiority."[499]

The generation of Germans who were children during the Nazi era were indoctrinated with such perceptions. It should therefore not be a surprise, that racially informed stereotypes – particularly if they are not directly associated with the victims of the Holocaust and the Jewish community – continued to thrive unchallenged in post-war Germany. Gyamerah underlines the continuity between colonialism and National Socialism, yet, the contrast between Germany's coming to terms with its Nazi past and its colonial past in Africa is glaring.[500] While the German government has offered a symbolic acknowledgement of responsibility in 2004 for the murder of 80,000 people in southwest Africa, it rejects to offer reparations, as well as a legal acceptance of the term 'genocide,' arguing that "the legal implications established under the 1948 United Nations Convention on Genocide do not apply to earlier mass killings."[501] What is hereby

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[496] Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Barnor Hesse, "Racialized modernity: An analytics of white mythologies," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 30 (2007): 643–663.
[497] Vepřek, *Ludwigsfeld: (Un-)Gleichzeitigkeiten,* 51.
[498] See for example: *Merkur*, "*Dort gibt es keine Zaeune*," 17.5.2017, https://www.merkur.de/lokales/dachau/dachau-ort28553/eine-ausstellung-im-dachauer-wasserturm-ueber-siedlung-ludwigsfeld-8314312.html Accessed August 10, 2020; *Muenchner Wochenanzeiger*, "*Einzigartige Dokumentation*," 11.5.2017, https://www.wochenanzeiger-muenchen.de/karlsfeld-dachau/einzigartige-dokumentation,90855.html Accessed August 10, 2020; Walter Gierlich, "*Ein richtiger Kosmos*," 22.5.2017, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/dachau/dachau-ein-richtiger-kosmos-1.3517409 Accessed August 10, 2020.
[499] Schilling, *German Postcolonialism in Four Dimensions*, 429.
[500] Luisa Beck, "Germany, a model for coming to terms with its past, still struggles with its colonial period," January 3, 2020, *Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/germany-a-model-for-coming-to-terms-with-its-past-still-struggles-with-its-colonial-period/2020/01/02/784b23a2-b927-11e9-8e83-4e6687e99814_story.html Accessed August 10, 2020.
[501] *Ibid*.

highlighted is that the acceptance of guilt and responsibility for the persecution and murder of entire populations in the context of the Holocaust did not necessarily expand to all forms of discrimination and exclusion. The acceptance of Germany's responsibility for the Holocaust in post-war Germany was indeed partial and only in response to external pressures, rather than a genuine rejection of racism.

The persistency of colonial legacies, and a lack of understanding of the connection of racism and imagery as well as language in the European context has been demonstrated most recently by the company Bahlsen, who responded to the accusation of racism with respect to the name "Africa" for chocolate-covered wafers: "We launched this product 60 years ago and then, as now, racism was not part of our thinking."[502] Similarly, the German company Dickmann posted an image of a chocolate-covered marshmallow in a bridal dress on the occasion of a wedding between Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. The popular chocolate-covered marshmallow on a waver had been called *Mohrenkopf* [moor's head] or *Negerkuss* [negro kiss),] and its name had only been changed recently to *Schokokuss* [chocolate kiss,] but as the advertisement demonstrates, Germany's colonial past is deeply embedded in many aspects of daily life, and racial references are not necessarily perceived as negatively by the majority population as they would be, for instance, in a North American context.[503]

The use of colonial German African terminology in relation to other unwanted foreign communities in Germany is particularly remarkable as it exemplifies how the colonial discourse entered German society so that it eventually became a common point of reference. The derogatory term *Mau-Mau Siedlung* is an example of how language reflects the values and social hierarchies and ideologies of a culture. While racist language may not necessarily be considered as such, it nevertheless relies on specific connotations and conceptualizations, which are evoked through the language.

Another example of the uniquely persistent continuity of colonial imagery and ideologies in the German context is the romanticization of North America's Indigenous peoples. As a white settler with German roots in the Canadian context with a specific interest in the legacies of colonialism and the residential schools in Canada, I am conscious of the continued ongoing impact of these systems on contemporary Indigenous peoples. Hartmut Lutz, Florentine Strelczyk and Renea Watchman use the term "Indianthusiasm" to describe specifically Germany's fascination and perceptions of North America's Indigenous peoples, which is linked to 19th century German colonial imagination.[504] By no means the first European to write about North American Indigenous cultures, German author Karl Mai created in 1893 a series of fictional novels, which solidified perceptions of Indigenous peoples until the present. May's novels were based on a fictional friendship between a German-American immigrant and his blood brother, the Apache chief Winnetou.[505] The popularity of this story has by no means diminished, which is reflected,

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[502] Susanne Cords and Heike Mund, "Uncle Ben's and Aunt Jemima logos: How Germany dealt with a similar problem," 19.6.2020, *Deutsche Welle*, https://www.dw.com/en/uncle-bens-and-aunt-jemima-logos-how-germany-dealt-with-a-similar-problem/a-53862646 Accessed August 19, 2020. Albeit the manufacturer conceded that "[i]n order to avoid our product evoking associations with racism, we are already working on renaming it."

[503] Jane Dalton, "German company apologises for 'racist' image of chocolate bride on Meghan Markle's wedding day," 23.5.2018, *The Independent*, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/royal-wedding-dress-super-dickmann-germany-company-chocolate-bride-marshmallow-image-a8365326.html Accessed August 19, 2020.

[504] Hartmut Lutz, Florentine Strelczyk, and Renea Watchman, *Indianthusiasm: Indigenous Responses* (Wilfried Laurier University Press, 2020).

[505] The cult series from the early 1960s has since been remade in 2016.

for example, in the highly popular Karl May *Festspiele* [festival] which are held annually in Bad Segeberg since 1952, and in cultural practices and events, such as specifically themed camps and festivals: for example, interested fathers may participate with their children in a trip to a tipi village, where they will sleep in a tipi, experience nature, make fire, ride in a canoe, and play drums; in the Roehn Indian Hotel, "Baking Bear" chief cook of the hotel invites guests to enjoy the organic farm and woodstove bakery; the *Indianerdorf* [Indian village] Hassmersheim caters to mini vacations, company or corporate events and offers original Sioux tipis. Here, visitors can "follow the traces of the Indians during an Indian summer" [my translation], enjoy a traditional evening with Ma Kai Peye, a Crow Indian (sic), and a wildly romantic view of the nearby castle Hornberg. The highly weeklong popular festival – *Tage der Indianer* [days of the Indians – my translation] – takes place in the summer and invites visitors to "experience Indian culture, spirit and tradition up close," and promises "Indian dances, authentic dress, Indian myths and original craftsmanship." In these representations, Indigenous peoples are romanticized and historicized, and it "assumes that anybody 'truly Indian' will follow cultural practices and resemble in clothing and physiognomy First Nations people before or during first contact."[506] Rarely do these events and performances elude to the present-day realities of North American Indigenous realities, or the ongoing legacies of colonialism, such as the intergenerational trauma, disenfranchisement, and inequities relating to health, education, life expectancy, education and employment, infrastructure and access to resources.

The *Neue Wohnsiedlung* Ludwigsfeld illustrates the continuities of racial ideologies, social and special segregation on a broader level in post-war Germany, which reaches into the present. While Germany is often applauded for its *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* with respect to the Holocaust, which has become part of Germany's national narrative, the assumption of responsibility for the past is by no means comprehensive. Specific population groups continued (and continue) to be excluded and discriminated against, both socially and spatially. Not dissimilar to the segregation of *heimatlose Auslaender* – and, arguably, also the forced labourers during the Nazi era – was the treatment of the foreign workers, or *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers), which were brought to Germany between 1955 to 1973 as part of a formal guest worker program.[507] As a result of the economic miracle, Germany suffered a shortage of workers, and subsequently signed agreements with a number of countries, including Italy, Greece, Spain and Turkey, which permitted the recruitment of guest workers for employment. These guest workers were meant to reside in Germany only temporary and were allowed to work for one to two years. The number of guest workers grew significantly from 280,000 workers in 1960 to over two million by 1973, until a recruitment ban came into effect. About 70% of these workers were men, who migrated alone, and financially supported their families in their home countries.[508] And while "in deliberate contrast to the exclusion and hostility implied in *Fremdarbeiter*, *Gastarbeiter* emphasizes the status of a foreigner as a guest who would receive fair treatment, such a worker would, of course, have to abide by the rules of the host, and most importantly, leave before too long."[509] Guest workers, not dissimilar to forced labourers during the Nazi era,

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[506] Harmut Lutz, "German Indianthusiasm: A Socially Constructed German National(ist) Myth," in *Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections* ed. Colin Calloway (University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 167-184, 168-169.
[507] In this context, I am referring specifically to West Germany.
[508] Eva Kolinsky and Wilfried van der Will (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern German Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[509] *Ibid*, 116.

and *heimatlose Auslaender*, were housed in specific areas of the city: BMW, for example, housed several thousands of foreign workers in *Werks-Wohnheimen* [factory dormitories.][510] Although Germany offered financial incentives to encourage guest workers who did not leave at the given time, to return to their home country, the majority decided to stay, and were joined by their families.[511] Due to their often blue-collar employment, and low wages, many families settled in run-down urban areas, and encountered significant challenges with respect to German society. And although many former guest worker families have lived in Germany for decades, they do not necessarily feel part of Germany society, as is expressed in an interview with an adult child of former Turkish guest workers. When asked if guest worker families were able to assimilate into mainstream German society, one of the interview participants states that

> "[t]here are still what Germans call …'parallel societies,'…these tight knight communities where people who live there only speak Turkish and don't have social ties with the broader German culture. Now, in part, that's because Germany didn't want them to be part of the culture for a long time."[512]

Mran Ayata, whose parents came to Germany decades ago, and who is German describes the complexities of his own identity:

> "Till today, I don't feel German, or I don't say, directly, I'm a German. So, I have a German passport and German papers and, of course, I live here, and I will live here. But so that I was growing up with a feeling being part of the society. And that's why it's not very easy to - for me to say I'm German."[513]

There are remarkable parallels and continuities between the segregation of forced labourers during the Nazi era and *heimatlose Auslaender* and guest workers during the post-war era, notably in the arrangements made by German companies in housing guest workers in company-owned residences. The deliberate settling of these populations in specifically dedicated areas which were set apart from the German population underlined and further exacerbated the divide between the two social groups. There are also remarkable similarities in the economic exploitation of these populations, who have and continue to live in 'parallel societies.' In the case of the Ludwigsfeld, the relationship with the city of Munich, and the surrounding communities has always been strained, not only due to the rejection experienced by the settlers in the Ludwigsfeld, but also due to the considerable neglect from which the community has suffered over decades.

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[510] Irene Kleber, "*In Muenchen ist die ganze Welt zu Hause*," 1.3.2013, *Abendzeitung Muenchen*, https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/inhalt.auslaenderanteil-in-der-bevoelkerung-in-muenchen-ist-die-ganze-welt-zu-hause.1bbca6db-2896-4aa6-9d99-79255a614e5a.html Accessed August 19, 2020.
[511] Kolinsky and van der Will, *Cambridge companion*.
[512] Linda Wertheimer, "Guest Workers still find Germany less than welcoming," 20.9.2015, *NPR*, https://www.npr.org/2015/09/20/441936824/guest-workers-still-find-germany-less-than-welcoming Accessed August 19, 2020.
[513] *Ibid*.

CHAPTER 5. Unsettled heritage, disturbing remains and the ownership of memory: a mass grave as a *lieux de memoire* and human remains as 'matter out of place.'

> "[…] while the body, when alive, is considered from almost every possible perspective by the social sciences, it has so far been paid virtually no attention once dead. Only archaeologists and anthropologists have sought to provide an account of the religious and political significance with which it is invested in various contexts. […] Studies on the subject are few and virtually no work has been done on the presence of the body at the scenes of mass crime […] Yet the fate of the body, and more particularly that of the corpse, in our view constitutes a fundamental key to understanding genocidal processes and the impact of mass violence on contemporary societies." (Anstett and Dreyfus, 2014)[514]

> "[…] given the importance of the body as a topic in the social sciences – the question of the body in relation to mass violence remains a largely unexplored theme. Over the last thirty years, studies centred on the body have evolved considerably, thanks to the growing importance in the English-speaking world of cultural studies, with its innovative view of the body as the meeting point of diverse social and cultural forces. This vision of the body as not only a resonant marker of identity on many levels, but also as the ultimate seat of affect, provides a solid starting point for a reading of human cultures as a coherent whole, whether as part of a literary, or biological or historical approach." (Anstett and Dreyfus, 2014)[515]

(My fieldnotes, Ludwigsfeld, beginning of October 2018): I took the bus 172 from the train station in Dachau to Ludwigsfeld. This would be the second time for me to visit this site, with which I had become familiar largely through aerial photographs from the 1940s, and via Google maps. I had spent hours poring over the photographs and the modern map, seeking for traces of the past in the present. I visit the Ludwigsfeld on a glorious early fall day: the sky displays the Bavarian white-blue colors, the Alps are slightly visible along the horizon behind a ribbon of haze, the trees glow in their autumnal colors, and the air is filled with the smell of freshly plowed soil and decaying leaves. The beauty

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[514] Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction: Corpses and mass violence: an inventory of the unthinkable," 3.
[515] *Ibid.*

of this day and the peacefulness of the domestic setting of Ludwigsfeld, surrounded by fields and meadows, are at odds with the dark and unsettling history of the place.



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Figure 17

Starting from the remaining barracks, I make my way around the periphery of the former OT camp which is marked by a mesh wire fence. During my last visit, the archaeological excavations had still been in process, and the area had been sealed off with tarps; now, the tarps have been removed, but the fence remains. I walk along a dirt path situated between the eastern-most periphery of the camp which leads into a densely overgrown wooded area. This, I recall, was the part of the OT camp that had been fenced off to house the Jewish women, which had been transported here in late 1944 and early 1945. Through the trees, I catch glimpses of a freshly plowed field to my right, while I follow the narrow path along the fence line. At regular intervals, flood lights on disintegrating concrete posts are set behind the fence. The sun is blocked almost entirely by the still-leafy trees, and the stagnant air feels dense and oppressive.


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Figure 18

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[516] Both images my own photographs, 2018. View of the area surrounding the former forced labour camp Allach.
[517] Google maps, area of archaeological excavations; my own photograph, 2018, view of path along southern periphery of area of former OT camp Karlsfeld.

At the south-eastern corner of the fenced area, the trees give way again to open fields, and with a slight sigh of relief, I turn left, following a wider dirt path which is bordered to the left by the fence, and to the right by a freshly plowed field. It is difficult to catch glimpses of the area behind the fence, as the outline of the area is lined with bushes, but in two areas it is possible to step closer to the fence and see the area where the archeological excavations had been undertaken. The area behind the fence resembles a battlefield: disturbed soil, trenches, mounds of pebbles and unidentifiable chunks of concrete and an industrial container in the far corner. The space speaks of neglect and complete absence of interest. I peep through the mesh wire fence and note three large boulders. In my estimation, they are situated in the approximate area of the findings of the human remains, and I wonder whether these markers have been placed here on purpose to mark the location (Klaus Mai confirmed my notion during our walk-about in the area).

[518]

Figure 19

In spite of the warm autumn sun, I feel a cold shiver running down my back. My gaze drifts across the empty pock-marked space, seeking for any sign which might indicate the significance of the site or the findings, but aside from the three boulders, there is no marker at all, only this vast and empty space. The area exudes an aura of prohibition and disconnect from its surrounding environment, as if the site has turned in on itself and has sealed itself off, keeping its dark secrets hidden and silent. If I were to light a candle,

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[518] All photographs courtesy of Gerlinde Dunzinger, 2018. View of the area of the archaeological excavations and the three boulders which mark the location where the human remains were found.

speak a prayer, or lay down a pebble, where would I do so? Somewhere along the mesh wire fence? In the woods? The peaceful, rural and homely setting of the contemporary Ludwigsfeld and the desolation of this location could hardly be more contrary.

1. "Dead body politics" at the site of the former forced labour camp Allach

While the diverse mnemonic and historical discourses surrounding the site of the former forced labour camp Allach are important aspects of the past and present, in my interpretation, the dead who were discovered on site in 2017 assume a particularly significant role. Historian Jean-Marc Dreyfus argues that

> "historical research on the memory of mass killings and genocides – research that has increased of the last few decades – would gain much by shifting its focus from monuments and representations (particularly in cultural studies) to the actual sites of the massacres and mass graves."[519]

An increased focus on the role of dead bodies, Dreyfus suggests, allows us to gain deeper insight into the impact of mass killings on contemporary society.[520] Indeed, the relatively recent 'forensic turn' in the humanities and social sciences with its increased focus on the material legacies of mass violence point toward a "real paradigm shift in remembrance," where "collective memories no longer rely exclusively on witness testimony but rather on material evidence."[521] This heightened attentiveness to these "materialities of mass death" also extends to what anthropologist Katherine Verdery has termed "dead body politics," the considerable posthumous political life and the social, mnemonic and political agency of the dead.[522] Corpses, according to Verdery, maintain a continued presence in society through which materialize, for example, through the moving of dead bodies: "their exit from one grave and descent into another marks a change in social visibilities and values."[523] The dead body with its ambiguous materiality and agency becomes a "matter out of place," which can be managed through rituals and concealment as way to restore symbolic order for the living.[524] At the same time, corpses have been theorized as "elements of assemblages of embodies practice and material culture," as well as points of connection between the living and the dead "in a nexus of social relationships, objects and exchanges through which personhood and remembrance are distributed and constituted."[525]

By considering the human remains of Allach as sites of conflict between interests of power as well as ambiguous and dynamic agents, I seek to illustrate the politicization of the dead and to examine, how these "dead bodies have posthumous political life in the service of creating a newly meaningful universe."[526] Through a material culture lens with a focus on the materiality of the body, the relationship between the dead body and the local landscape, as well as the handling

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[519] Dreyfus, "Renationalizing Bodies?" 130.
[520] Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction: Corpses and mass violence: an inventory of the unthinkable," 3.
[521] Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction. Why Exhume?" 1-14, 6-7.
[522] Featherstone, *The body in consumer culture*, 170–196; Hallam and Hockey, *Death, memory and material culture*; Hallam Hockey and Howarth, *Beyond the body;* Hockey, Komaromy and Woodthorpe, *The matter of death;* Jenkins, *Contesting human remains in museum collections;* Sendyka, *Sites That Haunt*; Sendyka, Prism: *Understanding Non-Sites of Memory*; Sørensen, *The Presence of the Dead*; Tarlow, "The aesthetic corpse"; Williams, *Death Warmed up*; Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies.*
[523] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies,* 19; Dziuban, *Mapping the 'Forensic Turn.'*
[524] Hockey et al., *The matter of death*; Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction: Corpses and mass violence: an inventory of the unthinkable."
[525] Hockey et al., *The matter of death*, 9; Williams, "Death Warmed up," 267.
[526] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 127.

of and dealings with the dead, I examine the ways in which the dead unsettle the world of the living, as well as in the ways in which this disturbance is managed by the living in order to restore and maintain social and political order, for example, through spatial sequestration. I trace not only the fundamentally unsettling, disruptive, and ambiguous agency of the dead body specifically in relation to mass violence and genocide, but also examine the processes of historical production in relation to this site.[527] Following Trouillot, who argues that "facts are never meaningless […] they become facts only because they matter in some sense […] facts are not created equal [and…]the production of traces is always also the creation of silence," I explore the different times and angles in which power and silences enter the production of this historical narrative.[528] By tracking power in relation to the production of historical narratives through specific 'moments' I aim to answer Foucault's question of 'how does it happen.'[529]

The struggle over the interpretation of the past of the former forced labor camp Allach as well as over the shape of a potential formal commemoration of the site clearly indicates not only the different perspectives and priorities of the interested parties, but also points to the fundamental ambiguity which is inherent in the development of historical narratives. The tension in this struggle has been enhanced considerably by the discovery of 12 skeletal human remains during archaeological excavations in the summer of 2017. The different responses to the public announcement of the discovery of human remains exemplifies how a site of memory "becomes a source of political contestation about who owns the human remains and how their violent death should be remembered."[530] It highlights the dynamics between the processes of historical narratives, memory practices and the 'forensic turn,' but also points to the usage and the meaning of dead bodies for different social groups, exhumations, mass graves and memory processes.

The remains of humans, such as bones or ashes, graves, and the treatment and handling of the dead have meaning far beyond their materiality. According to anthropologists Francisco Ferrandiz and Antonio Robben,

> "[e]xhumations, human remains, and their symbolic representations constitute complex ethnographic sites, saturated with meaning and power, in which social traumas and their percolation through the social fabric condense many intertwined processes ranging from deep personal emotions to international politics and transnational memories."[531]

The authors propose that burial sites, such as mass graves, function as memoryscapes as they condition and taint surrounding memory processes in that they point to human rights violations in topographies of death and terror; function as delicate and dangerous *lieux de memoire* in that they contain evidence of atrocities; and by eliciting testimony, witnessing and memory which is attached to the presence of remains.[532] The manipulation of human remains by the living, for example through exhumations from mass graves, may serve to "organize the physical and ethereal worlds occupied by the dead as well as reorder the lives of the living."[533]

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[527] Anstett and Dreyfus, "Introduction: Corpses and mass violence: an inventory of the unthinkable."
[528] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 28-29.
[529] Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*.
[530] Ferrandiz and Robben, *Necropolitics*, 3.
[531] *Ibid*., 24.
[532] Nora, *Between Memory and History*.
[533] Ferrandiz and Robben, *Necropolitics*, 2.

2. Dead bodies of genocide as carriers of meaning: uses of corpses as political tools in post-war Germany

The victims' bodies of the Nazi regime of terror have been at the core of the Holocaust: their material presence was undeniably one of the most horrific and disturbing outcomes of the Nazi's regime of terror. These bodies have also become one of the most widely known visual impressions of these events – in addition to, for example, iconic images of the infamous entrance gate which states "Arbeit Macht Frei" in Auschwitz 1; the gate and the selection platform of Birkenau; or emaciated prisoners gazing at the camera through a fence.[534] For the perpetrators, the sheer numbers of corpses and the material evidence of the crimes they posed became a major concern beginning in the summer of 1942, when the Germans began to implement *Operation 1005* – the code name for the clearance of all mass graves in Eastern Europe in order to erase evidence of genocidal crimes. The gruesome method of disposing of bodies by burning them on funeral pyres and the subsequent crushing of remaining bones served to conceal the genocide and eliminated the last traces of the humanity of the victims.[535]

During the last months of the war, with the arrival of the death marches and trains carrying prisoners from the evacuated camps further East, the living conditions of the concentration camps in the German Reich began to deteriorate dramatically, and the rapidly rising numbers of corpses became unmanageable. At the concentration camp Dachau, for example, the crematoria ovens worked overtime, and mass burial pits were created to deal with the overflow, but there was no end to the ever-increasing number of dead bodies. When the US Army liberated the main camp Dachau on April 29th 1945, they encountered over 30 railroad cars filled with bodies leading up to the camp, while on the inside the troops encountered stacks of corpses "piled up like kindling."[536]

As the allied forces liberated camps across Central and Eastern Europe, they encountered physical evidence of the prisoners murdered inside of the camps in the form of ashes, charred bones and corpses. Additionally, in the context of the brutal death marches across Germany thousands of concentration camp inmates were killed or perished from exhaustion, maltreatment and starvation and their remains had been simply left behind in fields, on the side of the road or in woods.[537]

To imagine the reality of the camps and the scope of the crimes it was necessary to *see* them; as a result, the allied troops took extensive documentary photographs and film footage in order to create a historical record. The film footage contributed to an illustration of the sheer magnitude of the atrocities in a more persuasive way than the photographs, and were shown as evidence during the Nuremberg Trials, but the images also flooded Western Europe and the United States. In addition to the recordings of the material evidence of the atrocities, the sites of the crimes soon became international spectacles produced for and consumed by a world-wide audience. Demands by army troops, war crimes investigators, reporters and dignitaries for organized tours stretched on for weeks after the initial days after liberation. In response, American field commanders transformed several of the liberated camps such as Dachau into didactic museums: the victims' corpses were placed on display and were only removed when

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[534] Sontag, *On Photography*.
[535] Israel Guttman, *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (New York: MacMillan Library References, 1995).
[536] Kennedy, *The Library of Congress World War II Companion*, 695.
[537] See *Nazi Concentration Camps*, directed by E. Ray Kellog; James B. Donovan; George C. Stevens, US Army Signal Corps, 1945; *Night Will Fall*, directed by Andre Singer, Angel TV, 2014.

they began to pose health problems. At times, such as a wagon overflowing with emaciated corpses, which is depicted in a famous photograph of Buchenwald, GIs frequently replaced the disintegrating corpses with newer bodies, thereby restaging the evidence to create a visual narrative of Nazi crimes.[538]As few Germans admitted to knowing anything about the camps, local field commanders in charge made it a practice to force local citizens to view the sites, and subsequently to transfer and bury, or to exhume and rebury dead bodies. This purposeful shaming of the German public was spontaneous and emotion-driven, and served as a significant step in the allied efforts to 're-educate' the German population: the expected pedagogical effect was to deeply shake the seemingly stoic German citizens, to induce a sense of guilt and shame, and to develop empathy with the victims.[539] The shock and horror experienced by the liberating armies as they encountered the masses of dead bodies, the ways in which the corpses were utilized, displayed, moved and concealed through burial, and the emotion-laden forced confrontation of German citizens with the materiality of the genocidal crimes underline the ambiguous, ambivalent and highly politicized agency of the deceased and also exemplify the capacity of the dead to evoke powerful emotions and contested meaning among diverse social groups.[540]

In the post-war era, the dead bodies of the genocide continued to have symbolic power: in the decades after 1945, the remains of the victims of the Third Reich were at times and in specific contexts exhumed and reburied, repatriated or the source of local scandals. At the same time, mural-sized photographs of piles of corpses were a dominant feature used in German memorial sites until the 1990s. These haunting and overwhelming images were meant to shock visitors and to confront them directly with the horrific suffering of the inmates.[541] Likewise, some international memorial sites, such as the memorial and museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, continue to use human material, such as hair, or piles of personal belongings, such as shoes, protheses, or suitcases, to symbolically represent the masses of bodies. Additionally, various memorial sites, such as the memorial sites Majdanek and Sobibor, as well as the USHMM use ashes to reference the victims.[542]

Yet, while the corpses of the Nazi's victims were highly visible and politicized in some areas of society, they were markedly absent in others: many of the early post-war forensic examinations of the former camps and death sites remained largely unknown and have only become the subject of scholarly interest recently.[543] Dreyfus noted that "a certain disembodiment in the accounts of concentration camps, which tend to focus on the stories of survivors and to neglect the material aspects of the […] treatment of the dead."[544] Over the past two decades, a growing body of literature on death, objects and spaces associated with the dead emerged,

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[538] Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye;* Robert H. Abzug, *Inside the Vicious Heart: Americans and the Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Oxford University Press: 1991), 128.
[539] Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (University of Chicago Press, 2000); Barbie Zelizer, *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (Rutgers University Press, 2001).
[540] Mauriello, *Forced Confrontation;* Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye*.
[541] Geissler, *Individuum und Masse*.
[542] Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*.
[543] Sturdy Coll, Caroline, "Holocaust Victims, Jewish Law and the Ethics of Archaeological Investigations," in *Accessing Campscapes: Inclusive Strategies for Using European Conflicted Heritage* ed. Zuzanna Dziuban Vol. 3 (Autumn 2018): 29.
[544] Dreyfus, "Renationalizing Bodies?", 131.

including a particular interest in grave sites, cemeteries, 'contaminated' landscapes, and the countless unknown dead in mass graves.[545]

3. Death at the former forced labor camp Allach

The exhumed skeletal remains at the site of the former forced labor camp Allach are situated in the wider context of the decades of post-war interactions of the German public with the dead bodies of the Third Reich as outlined above. The use of the dead bodies by the allied powers to 're-educate' the German public through graphic images and shame, and the similar formats which were used in German memorial sites for decades to install democratic values particularly in German school children, ascribed a unique meaning to the victims' remains specifically for German civil society which was charged with deeply unsettling and perhaps contradictory emotions. In order to find ways to deal with the disturbing material reminders of the Nazi era, German institutions and agencies found ways to contain this difficult memory through sequestration, for example, through the creation of specific cemetery sites in which the dead victims of the Third Reich were buried or through the consolidation of multiple individual burials into a larger anonymous grave. In addition, the original sites of perpetration, such as former concentration camps, became the focal point of the commemoration of all victims of the Nazi era. While individual gravesites at or close to the site of the victim(s) death arguably contained specific material and mnemonic traces of the dead, including evidence of the crimes, through the removal and reburial of the dead in specific cemeteries and graves the connection between the site of death and the individual victim is thus severed. By grouping all dead victims together into an incomprehensibly large number of name- and faceless dead, the victims are robbed – again – of their personhood and the individuality of their death, while at the same time, the staggering numbers of genocide victims in anonymous communal graves make a personalized commemoration by the living impossible.

While sequestration theory is contested due to its lack of distinctions and with respect to contemporary socio-cultural changes in Western culture relating to death, the notion that the dead as well as rituals and processes relating to death have been sequestrated from mainstream society is particularly well suited in relation to the placement of victims of the Third Reich into specifically circumscribed spaces.[546] This management of the materiality of genocide in post-war Germany through spatial sequestration of the victims of the Third Reich to cemeteries serves as a spatial organization of life and death, and, arguably, even as a spatial and temporal separation between Nazi Germany and the newly created democratic West Germany. The placement of

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[545] Phillip Bachelor, Sorrow and Solace: *The Social World of the Cemetery* (Amityville , NY: Baywood Publishing, 2004); Doris Francis, Leonie Kellaher, and Georgina Neophytou, "The cemetery: the evidence of continuing bonds" in *Grief, Mourning and Death Ritual* ed. Jeanne Hockey, Jennie Katz, and Neil Small (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2001); Doris Francis, Leonie Kellaher, and Georgina Neophytou, *The Secret Cemetery* (Oxford: Berg, 2005); Julie Rugg, "Defining the place of burial: what makes a cemetery a cemetery?" *Mortality* Vol. 5, Iss. 3 (2005): 259–275; Julie Rugg, "Lawn cemeteries: the emergence of a new landscape of death," *Urban History* Vol. 33, Iss. 2 (2006): 213–233; Sarah Tarlow, "Landscapes of memory: the nineteenth-century garden cemetery," *European Journal of Archaeology* Vol. 3, Iss. 2 (2000): 217–239; Ken Worpole, *The Cemetery in the City* (Stroud: Comedia, 1997); Ken Worpole, *Last Landscapes: The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West* (London: Reaktion Books, 2003).

[546] Peter Bjerregaard, Anders Emil Rasmussen, Tim Flohr Sørensen, ed. *Materialities of Passing: Explorations in Transformation, Transition and Transience* (Routledge, 2018); Hockey et al, *Grief*; Clive Seale, *Constructing Death: The Sociology of Dying and Bereavement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Stanley Liz, Sue Wise, "The Domestication of Death: The Sequestration Thesis and Domestic Figuration," *Sociology* Vol. 45, Iss. 6 (2011): 947-962; H. Willmott, "Death. So what? Sociology, sequestration and anticipation," *The Sociological Review* Vol. 48, Iss. 4 (2000): 649-665.

victims of the Nazi regime into particular sections of local cemeteries or in specifically dedicated cemeteries [*KZ Friedhoefe*][547] serves to confine the dead bodies of the Nazi era into spaces which exist outside of the realm of everyday life. The potentially unsettling nature of the dead bodies as well as the difficult history they represent is managed and controlled through established socio-cultural practices, which seek to order the present occupied by the living. In addition to these broader socio-political trends and strategies of managing the dead of the Third Reich in post-war Germany, the findings at the Allach site are also embedded in layers of local historical events, activities and trajectories which range between the time of the camp's operation to the recent discovery, exhumation and reburial of the dead.

As a result of changing practices of managing the Nazi era's dead, the Allach site as such and more specifically the victims' remains contained in the site, have been subjected to disturbance, neglect, and at times deliberate silencing. In this section, I will examine the aspect of death as well as the perception and treatment of the dead of the former forced labour camp Allach during the time of the camp's operation, after liberation and during the following years and decades. Through a close examination of the processes, procedures and decisions around the discovery of the human remains I seek to illustrate how the unsettling and disruptive agency of the 12 human skeletal remains has been mitigated and managed in order to maintain a specific order among the living: the

> "activities surrounding bodily death [which] can be seen to have ritual dimensions, in that they are implicitly oriented toward restoring symbolic order. As such, they can constitute more than simply instrumental necessities determined by professional […] discourses on the dead body."[548]

The circumstances in the OT Lager and the working conditions at the BMW bunker construction site were not meant to keep the workforce alive and followed the practice of extermination through labour. In addition to the deplorable circumstances in the camp, the excruciating hard labor and deliberate killings, the prisoners suffered severe malnutrition, illnesses, exposure, arbitrary abuse and work accidents. Due to the staggeringly high numbers of prisoners, it is possible to lose sight of the deeply personal experience of suffering of individuals. As a result, the individual becomes part of the faceless millions of victims of the Third Reich, and thereby loses their individuality and humanity. To some extent, this effect has been perpetuated and enhanced through existing publications on the former subcamp complex Allach, which focus either specifically on the production of engines by BMW; define prisoners through specific categories, such as PoW or concentration camp prisoner, or alternatively by nationality. These strategies further separate individual prisoners from their humanity and personhood. In an effort to counter this effect, I will draw from testimony provided by survivors during post-war investigations to illustrate the inhumane and deplorable circumstances in the Allach subcamp. By incorporating the at times gruesome and disturbing descriptions of the atrocities which were committed in the camp as well as at the BMW plant, I hope to underscore the unpredictable and arbitrary brutality under which the prisoners were forced to live and work, and furthermore to emphasize the deeply personal

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[547] *KZ Friedhoefe*, or *Konzentrationslager Friedhoefe*, means literally concentration camp cemeteries. *Konzentrationslager* was commonly abbreviated to KZ, and *KZ Friedhoefe* are specific cemeteries for the victims of the former camps. These cemeteries can be but are not always located within the area of a former camp and can at times also hold victims of the death marches at the end of the war. They were usually created by local residents or by the liberating armies.

[548] Hockey et al, *The matter of death*, 16.

suffering experienced by individual prisoners, which is lost in the total sums of dead.[549] The survivor testimony demonstrates the many aspects of the Allach subcamp, which were deliberately designed to exterminate the Jewish inmates through labour. From these statements, we can gain insight into the microcosmos of terror, hunger, and deprivation which was the camp and the bunker construction site, which systematically stripped away any remaining resilience or strength and oftentimes resulted in death.

The torture and killing of prisoners at the camp was arbitrary and oftentimes occurred as a penalty or perhaps simply to exert the limitless power which guards and camp commandants had over the inmates. For example, the prisoner Karl Kraemer testified that camp commandant Sebastian Eberl demanded that a Polish prisoner walk toward the electric fence, and when the prisoner hesitated, shot him.[550] Adolf Maislinger witnessed the shooting of a 19-year-old Russian prisoners for alleged sabotage, and Ernest Barminka reports of killing in the hospital barracks, where a young SS doctor beat the Jewish doctor Molner to death. Wladyslaw Hudy witnessed once that a SS guards beat several Soviet prisoners to death because they searched for food under the rubbish. Wladyslaw Lenski reported that commandant Eberl often pointed at specific prisoners with the words: "I don't want to see this face at tomorrow's appell." In this case, the prisoner received an injection and was dead within 10 minutes. Several survivors reported executions and public torture: Ferdindan Westerbarkey witnessed the hanging of 6 Russian prisoners at the BMW plant for alleged sabotage, and likewise, August Baumann as well as Zdzislaw Findzinski reported the hangings of about 5 prisoners after the evening appell. Findzinski also testified that commandant Eberl publicly hanged prisoners for attempts to escape and witnessed a dozen times in the winter during harsh cold, that commandant Eberl ordered the Germans to pour cold water over several prisoners selected by him. The drenched prisoners froze stiff, until they finally collapsed on the ground.[551] Tadeusz Kubik testified to the hanging of 2 Russian prisoners for alleged sabotage in September or October 1944.

In late October 1944, Isaak Schmilovits, a strong healthy man, received 25 blows with a stick for allegedly stealing bread, and died shortly after the beating.[552] Salomon Meschulam's father, who was only 45 years old, died within 3 to 4 weeks after arriving in the OT lager.[553] Similarly, Adrew Moskovits's father died around Christmas 1944 as a result of abuse and malnourishment.[554] A number of survivors described the ordeals the prisoners suffered during their work assignments: Simon Hirsch described the wooden shoes the prisoner wore at work. The upper strap froze stiff in the winter and rubbed their feet bloody. Prisoners, who had tucked a piece of cloth under the strap, had to wear a sign around their neck, stating 'Sabotage is my death' and were mauled to death by dogs on the *Appellplatz* in front of all other prisoners. Hirsch further reported of prisoners being beaten to death by Kapo Knoll during their work assignment and killings in the *Bunkerkommando* at the BMW plant. Gabriel Rosenbaum witnessed that Rudolf Gross, wo was 50 years old, was beaten to death, while he was assigned to the *Saeger and Werner* commando. Marcel Riviere testified that specifically in the commando *Dyckerhoff* prisoners died fast, exhausted from the hellish transporting of heavy bags of cement, struck down by the cold (at times,

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[549] The translations from German testimony to English are mine.
[550] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, BArch B 162/28118.
[551] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, *Zeugenvernehmung* AZ.: DS 77/68 26. Sept 68.
[552] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, AZ IV 410 AR 2141/67.
[553] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, AZ IV 410 AR 2141/67.
[554] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, AZ IV 410 AR 2141/67.

the temperature fell below minus 25 degree Celsius) from hunger, being beaten to dead, as victims of accidents, falls from high scaffolding due to dizziness.[555] Even one of the camp commandants, Johann Kaster, who was in charge of the camp between July 17 1944 until August 29 1944, and then transferred to Kaufering camp XI, testified that specifically in the work commando *Sager and Woerner* as well as during railway construction, prisoners died because of the hard working conditions and the heavy abuse by the guards. A post-war investigation report notes that during the fall of 1944, while constructing the bunker, prisoners, whose wheelbarrow slipped into the formwork pit, were forced to jump into the pit. The following prisoners were forced to cover them with mortar. Afterwards, they were pulled with pickaxes from the mortar.[556]

It is particularly challenging, if not impossible, to determine the number of prisoners who perished at the Allach subcamp complex and at the BMW plant. While some individual accounts exist which reference the number of dead bodies at the site, it is clear that these numbers are estimations.

In addition to the reported killings and accidental deaths on site, several selections at the Allach subcamp took place: commandant Kastner as well as other eye witnesses reported that in the Fall 1944, between 120 and 150 sick prisoners and those unable to work were selected and deported to Auschwitz, and during the a post-war investigation, it was determined that two months prior to the liberation of the camp, another selection took place during which between 100 to 150 exhausted prisoners were transferred from the Allach subcamp. Eyewitness reports speak to several selections among the Jewish prisoners, such as in August and November 1944 and in February 1945. As only sick prisoners were selected for selections and subsequently deported to Auschwitz, we can assume that they were likely killed upon arrival.

It has been reported by survivors that only 4 days before the arrival of the American troops, commandant Eberl took about 200 Russians and walked them accompanied by 10 SS guards about 200 metres outside of the camp. The witnesses heard an explosion, and after the liberation of the American troops, went to this site and only found 'a pile of flesh.' Abe Cukier reported of the end phase that in more detail:

> "the Allach camp was the worst that happened to me during the entire time of my suffering. The camp was overcrowded with prisoners who waited for the extermination in Dachau and were already registered. The closing-in of the Americans resulted in further new arrivals, so that as far as the prisoners did not die of starvation, room could only be made through killings by various measures. The SS guards and Kapos killed indiscriminately and in large numbers through shootings, hangings and beating to death, and various other forms of killing. The number of victims went into the hundreds and thousands." [my translation][557]

Alexander Speiser reported that usually, "[t]he dead were brought to Dachau for cremation, but toward the end, when the number of dead increased, […] the bodies were buried on site." [my translation]. Abraham Hochaeuser, who arrived as a prisoner in the OT camp presumably in the second half of April based on the presence of women, described the horrid conditions in the camp:

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[555] Zdenek, *Allach—Sklaven für BMW*.
[556] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, IV 410 AR-Z 203/75 Ludwigsburg, 23.10.75
[557] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, BArch B 162/28118.

> "We marched form Munich to Allach. There, a former asylum [sic] had been turned into a camp. Thousands of prisoners form all nations, including women who were guarded by female SS guards, were housed here. The female SS guards wore riding boots and matching riding crops. From afar, we could hear the screams of the women, when they were beaten by the guards. We had tears in our eyes, when we saw for the first time women close up in the giant death mills. We did not have to work anymore in Allach. Our only distraction was to load the thousands of dead onto the trolleys, which transported them to Dachau, were they were cremated. The entire organization was out of joint. At noon, we received a liter of water with two potatoes, and during the distribution of this meager meal, there was murder and homicide among the prisoners. Most of the prisoners were already so weak, that they could only lie on the ground. During the delousing, they took our clothes and give us new rags. Some literally walked around naked." [my translation] [558]

Meir Muelsztajn described that during the last days prior to liberation that he "[…] was so delirious from hunger that I could barely take in my surroundings, I noticed how some of my fellow sufferers gnawed on rotting bones […] The miserable ones dug up the only superficially buried corpses, and out of their minds from hunger gnawed on these remains."[559] [my translation]

The commandant of the Allach camp, Josef Jarolin, testified during his post-war trial, that during the last days of the war the corpses of newly arriving trains with prisoners from other subcamps had to be buried in mass graves on site and daily at least 30 additional prisoners died.

Max Eichhorn, a chaplain who arrived with the US army reported of the conditions at the OT camp during the first week of May 1945: "…the comparative conditions in the Jewish and Gentile section may be understood through one simple statistic: the first day I was there, 40 Jews and 5 Gentiles died. In other words, the ratio was about 15 Jews to one Gentile […] Both at Allach and Dachau, death was commonplace. Naked bodies lying outside of barracks waiting to be carted away, were a familiar sight."

The chaotic and highly dynamic events and circumstances, particularly during the last weeks and days leading up to the liberation of the camp, make it nearly impossible to determine with accuracy and consensus the number of inmates, and, more specifically, the number of dead in the Allach subcamp complex. To further complicate the matter, prisoner transfers between the main camp Dachau and the Allach subcamp complex, death marches and evacuations toward the end of the war contribute to the difficulty of determining the number of victims. In addition, it can be assumed that prisoners who were selected and transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau for extermination, were not registered as victims of the Allach camp, while, at the same time, it is unclear if and where the dead of incoming transports to the Allach camp were recorded. As a result, the numbers of victims are even more disparate and point to the difficulty of tracing the movements, transfers and recording of vast numbers of prisoners in flux. In the records, the Allach camp accounted for comparatively few deaths, as prisoners, who were transferred back to the main camp, either dead or alive, were reported as deaths in the Dachau camp. For example, the Munich public prosecutor for the Allach camp complex during post-war trials documented 25 deaths, while the *Dachauer Totenbuch* [Dachau book of the dead,] which recorded the deaths in Allach, listed 61 dead.[560] On the other hand, the testimony of survivors as well as previous camp commandants

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[558] Hochhaeuser, *Unter dem gelben Stern,* 52.
[559] Dachau Archiv, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, StAnw Muenchen 34817.
[560] Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex* Dachau-Allach, 3.

speak of considerably larger numbers of dead. In his exploration of the French search mission in Germany which was active between 1946 and 1958, Dreyfus notes that a "grave that was opened at Allach, near Dachau, revealed thousands of bodies as well."[561] Mr. Mai estimates the number of dead as high as 1,400 and suggests that an additional 300 so far unknown victims may still be buried at the site.[562]

4. Unsettled memories and human remains as "matter out of place"

While it is unclear how many corpses were buried in the vicinity of the camp prior to liberation, it is documented that inmates who perished after the arrival of the 45th Infantry Division of the US army on April 30th 1945 as a result of illnesses and exhaustion were buried in two mass graves on site or transported and buried by local civilians in the north-east corner of the Feldmoching cemetery.[563]

The mass graves in the area of the former OT camp Karlsfeld underwent a sequence of disturbances between May 1945 until the mid-1950s which were partially the result of the desire by other nations to repatriate their dead, as well as responses to the deplorable state of the burial site and furthermore, measures by the Bavarian state to consolidate the patchwork of large numbers of small gravesites, which were scattered across the landscape. Correspondence between the director of the funeral home, the city commissioner, and the state compensation office in 1948, and subsequently in 1950, illustrates the confusion that already existed at this time over the exact location of gravesites, the number of dead as well as over the various subsections of the former Allach camp; for instance, the area of the camp is interchangeably referred to as '*Schwabenbachlager'* [based on the name of the nearby small creek Schwabenbaechl,] as well as *StEGlager* [*Staatliche Erfassungsgesellschaft fuer oeffentliches Gut m.b.H.]* – which was the post-war trustee of public property, and was under the control of the US military government and army – as well as *Aussenlager* Allach and KZ *Aussenlager* Muenchen-Ludwigsfeld.[564] It appears, based on correspondence by Dr. Paul Husarek from September 28th 1948, that exhumations of 2 mass graves and subsequent transfer of the dead to the Dachau *Waldfriedhof* were due to the deplorable and neglected state of the gravesites. A correspondence to the state commissary from October 19th 1948 likewise speaks of 2 "communal graves" with approximately 20 deceased, which were to be transferred in November the same year.[565] Subsequently, the exhumation of a mass grave is documented on November 9th 1948 and it is noted that 75 skeletons were secured from a burial pit in close vicinity to the former delousing barracks (today the location of the orthodox church).[566] These skeletons were reburied in the Dachau *Waldfriedhof*. Correspondence concerning the mass graves begins again in August 1950, detailing that during exploratory small shovel digs human remains as well as parts of civilian clothing were discovered, but it was unclear if this suggested an individual or a mass burial. The location of these graves was based on the report by the eyewitness Horst Hillert, who, in October 1945, was housed in the last barracks in the farthest north-eastern corner of the former camp area. Hillert detailed a minimum of 50 grave markers with Jewish inscriptions. According to Hillert, the area was levelled by American soldiers in December 1945, and the grave markers as

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[561] Dreyfus, "Renationalizing bodies?" 139.
[562] Mai, *Der KZ-Außenlagerkomplex* Dachau-Allach, 3.
[563] Mai, *Verfolgung, Krieg, Flucht und Vertreibung*, 87.
[564] *Stadtarchiv* Muenchen, *KZ Karlsfeld Bestattungsamt*, DE-1992-BES-0377; *Ibid.*, DE-1992-BES-0430.
[565] *Ibid*.
[566] *Ibid*.

well as coffins were burned.[567]

Subsequent notes detail the discovery of graves number 1 through 13 over the course of several days in August 1950, and Ms. Miluscheva, who was one of the individuals present during the exhumation, lists as items retrieved from one of the graves a chest pouch, a mirror, a pocket knife, which was engraved with the prisoner number 40161 as well as the name Maria Giovanni and a Jewish bible.[568] On November 10th 1950, during a visit to the grave site in the *StEG* camp the following grievances were explicitly noted: an only provisional fencing of the area, which had partly been torn down and removed; half of all covering boards of the grave sides had been removed; the coffins and remains were uncovered and visible for anyone; and that one of the open graves had been soiled with human excrements. The state of this grave site was reported on December 22nd 1950 in the local newspaper *Abendzeitung*.[569] It appears that from 1951 onward, the grave site was fully fenced in and cared for more carefully. From August 1952 on, the Bavarian administration for castles, parks and lakes took over the care for this small cemetery, until summer 1955, when the remains of 111 individuals were exhumed by the directorate general of the French ministry for war victims and transferred to the *Ehrenfriedhof* [cemetery of honor][570] on the Leitenberg, and the KZ cemetery Allach was thereby dissolved.[571]

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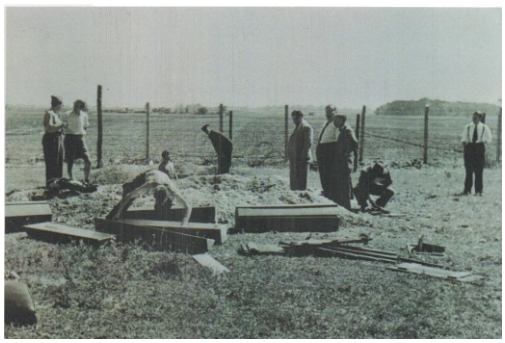

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[567] *Ibid*. Note: it is unclear why the area would have been leveled by the American army and no further information could be obtained relating to this event.
[568] *Ibid*.
[569] *Ibid*.
[570] *Ehrenfriedhoefe* commonly refer to cemeteries for soldiers but may also refer to burial sites of victims of the Third Reich.
[571] *Stadtarchiv* Muenchen, *KZ Karlsfeld Bestattungsamt*, DE-1992-BES-0377; *Ibid*., DE-1992-BES-0430.
[572] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, F6222-0002, open burial sites during exhumations in the area of former Jewish camp, ca. 1950.
[573] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, F6112, open burial sites during exhumations in the area of former Jewish camp, ca. 1950.
[574] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, F6113, open burial sites during exhumations in the area of former Jewish camp, ca. 1950.
[575] Gedenkstaette Dachau Archiv, F6124, open burial sites during exhumations in the area of former Jewish camp, ca. 1950.

Figure 20

These sequences of exhumations occurred in a state-wide initiative, which sought to consolidate the almost 500 individuals and communal grave sites – often labeled KZ cemeteries or, more dubiously, *Ehrenfriedhoefe* - related to victims of the Third Reich, which were scattered across the Bavarian landscape in the 1950s. While the administrative responsibility of these cemeteries lay in the hands of the Bavarian administration for parks, castles and lakes, the logistical aspects of care were often carried out by local communities in agreement with the administration.[576] According to Dr. Maerz, a researcher at the foundation of Bavarian memorial sites, a transfer of the dead in many locations was desirable as many of the sites were located in remote areas, at times also close to roads, and were therefore difficult to find and access, not "dignified" or "attractive." The consolidation of many individual or remote graves into larger cemeteries allowed for a more consistent standard of care for dedicated sites. Dr. Maerz explained that the amalgamation of the almost 500 grave sites resulted in 75 consolidated sites in the present. It was in this context, that the KZ cemetery Allach was dissolved in the 1950s.[577]

The archeological investigation which began in 2016 and concluded with the finding of 12 human skeletal remains in the summer 2017, is largely due to the persistent urging of Mr. Mai.[578] It is unclear why these dead were discovered in this area in the first place, as it was assumed, that all dead had been discovered and transferred during the exhumations in the 1950s.
In order to bring together the variety of different individuals, organization and institutions which had a vested interest in the archaeological excavations of the site, a round table had been created in 2016 upon the recommendation of the Munich mayor Dieter Reiter.[579] He also appointed Mr. Nerdinger, the founding director of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism. Participants of this panel included representatives of the proprietary project company; the Bavarian state office for the protection of heritage; the foundation of Bavarian memorial sites; the memorial site Dachau; the Jewish community Munich and upper Bavaria; the cultural department of the city of Munich, and Herr Klaus Mai.

In July 2017, during archaeological excavations in the area between the so-called hospital barracks and the camp fence, 15 rectangular discolorations appeared, which suggested, due to their relatively regular alignment, shape and size, grave or exhumation pits as documented in the plan of 1955. In addition, small horizontal ditches were noticed which connected the pits, and appeared to be test cuts, also from 1955. Isolated small human bones, such as from fingers or toes, were retrieved from several empty pits. A full burial was discovered in a pit at a depth of about 80 cm, under the remains of a wooden cover, containing a supine adult male, with the head facing south, and carefully folded hands in the lap area. Based on the exhumation plan from 1955, another burial had already been retrieved from this pit with the head facing north. It is possible, that the discovered skeleton was positioned at a deeper level and was therefore overlooked, and the according wooden cover was perhaps assumed to be the bottom of the grave or the coffin.[580]

During a more careful analysis it was noted that only 14 of the uncovered 15 pits matched

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[576] Interview Dr. Jascha Maerz, *Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstaetten*, Nov. 12, 2018.
[577] *Ibid*. Note: Dr. Maerz noted that the initiative for the exhumations and the subsequent dissolution of concentration camp burials was oftentimes initiated by international tracing services. Exhumations of other communal graves predated the final dissolution of the camp cemetery Karlsfeld.
[578] The archaeological excavations were undertaken due to the history of the location.
[579] Zeller, "Fund im Ludwigsfeld: Die Toten finden keine Ruhe."
[580] Büro für Archäologie Neupert & Simm GbR, *Grabungsbericht zur archäologischen Maßnahme M-2016-7-2, Seite 1 München, M: KZ-Außenlager Allach*, G-2016+2017, Stand 05.01.2018, 33 – 38.

the plan of 1955: an additional pit was discovered situated in the middle of the southern row of graves. Here, at a depth of about 30 cm below the topsoil, the burial of 5 individuals was exposed. These individuals were all carefully positioned on their backs, the heads alternately facing north and south. Immediately after the exhumation of these skeletons, an additional burial location with 6 additional individuals was discovered directly below the previous one. Although disturbances by shovel tests in this pit dislocated some of the bones, but the burial pit as such was apparently not noted in 1955. The fact that human remains were found in an area, where, according to the documentation, none should have remained, is puzzling. Based on the balance of the records, not a single individual should have remained, as the numbers of dead bodies which were exhumed, transferred, and reburied elsewhere match. The test trenches indicate that the burial pits were reached.[581] On the other hand, it is possible, that the stacking of the burials may have led misled the undertakers in the 1950s: according to Dr. Haberstroh, a wooden board which was situated between two superimposed bodies, was partially covered with the local gravel, which may have further concealed a prior burial beneath. But, as Dr. Haberstroh emphasizes, "to overlook all 12, that's quite surprising, but then, in the end, must be ascribed simply to sloppiness."[582] Regardless of whether the 12 skeletons were the result of either forgetfulness or sloppiness, both options are equally disturbing and concerning, and raise questions about the lack of consideration and respect to the dead.

Upon the discovery of the human remains, the proprietor of the site approached the Munich Jewish community, and subsequently an Israeli expert in Jewish burial rites, Rabbi Yacob Ruza, attended the excavation.[583] According to Dr. Sabine Schalm, the consultation of the Jewish community and the Rabbi was notable and by no means common practice, and explained that the proprietor has no obligation to take an inventory the findings or to preserve them. The careful handling of the findings, Dr. Schalm emphasized, is not a matter of course.[584] Mr. Mai recalled that during a meeting of the round table, it was communicated by Dr. Nerdinger that the Rabbi had certified that these victims were not Jewish as they had not been buried according to Jewish rites.[585]

A team of forensic anthropologists examined the skeletons in situ before they were exhumed, cleaned and underwent a complete morphological examination. After these procedures, the remains were placed into individual coffins and stored in a freight container on site until October 2017, at which point the participants of the round table were informed of the findings.[586] According to Sabine Schalm, the city of Munich assumed the responsibility for the custody of the human remains; they were subsequently kept at the Munich crematorium. Mr. Mai noted that he received a phone call from a pastor who asked him if he could organize a funeral.[587] Mr. Mai declined and subsequently, Dr. Gabriele Hammermann, the director of the memorial site Dachau, arranged for the funeral.[588] Mr. Mai describes the ceremony as very impressive and dignified.[589]

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[581] *Ibid*., 33 – 38.
[582] Interview Dr. Jochen Haberstroh, *Bayerisches Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege*, Nov. 8, 2018.
[583] Büro für Archäologie Neupert & Simm GbR, *Bericht über die Sondierungen am 20.06.2017 auf dem Gelände Granatstr. 12,* June 6, 2017.
[584] Interview Dr. Sabine Schalm, *Kulturreferat* Munich, Nov. 14th, 2018.
[585] Interview Klaus Mai, Munich, Oct. 11th, 2018.
[586] Büro für Archäologie Neupert & Simm GbR, "*Grabungsbericht zur archäologischen Maßnahme*," 33 – 38.
[587] Interview Dr. Sabine Schalm, *Kulturreferat* Munich, Nov. 14th, 2018.
[588] Interview Dr. Gabriele Hammermann, *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, Oct. 26th, 2018.
[589] Interview Klaus Mai, Munich, Oct. 11th, 2018.

5. Managing the dead and "dead body politics"

Verdery suggests that corpses maintain a continued presence in society through "dead body politics," which may materialize in specific engagement with the dead through ritual, examinations, emotional responses or exhumations.[590] Similarly, sociologist Claire Moon points to the ambiguous role of corpses, in that they lie at the intersection of "different social worlds in which diverse parties – legal, forensic, humanitarian, historical, political, social and familial – are differently invested."[591] Their identities may shift, depending on specific social groups, and thereby demand specific attention or treatment, or elicit emotional responses.[592]

The disruptive, unsettling and ambiguous agency of the dead of the former subcamp Allach is apparent in the different forms of engagement, activities, and responses they elicited from a variety of individuals, organizations, and institutions since the end of the Second World War. The dead bodies evoked a range of responses, from their initial interment into the ground by unknown persons who sought to maintain at least a minimum of dignity by arranging the bodies in a specific way, to their repeated exhumations, examinations, repatriations, transfers and reburial, to their final discovery, exhumation, transfer and re-interment in 2017. The decisions about the fate of these bodies and their resting place were motivated to a large extent by the desire to "reorder the lives of the living,", by claiming them (for example, by French delegates) in order to transfer them to and place them into what is perceived to be a more suitable resting place.[593] The continued presence of dead bodies in the ground even after the initial has been at least assumed, and finally, insisted upon by individuals, such as Klaus Mai. His persistence and, in turn, the possibility of remaining dead bodies in the ground – particularly as victims of the Nazi terror– have created a degree of pressure on proprietors, administrators and institutions, which necessitated a more thorough investigation. Furthermore, the possibility of a 'mass grave,' as it was referred to in the local press, created a considerable degree of anxiety and concern, and dictated, according to Dr. Haberstroh, "great caution for anybody involved with this, and I believe that quite a few were concerned burning their fingers….specifically, because of the term 'mass graves.'"[594]

The apprehension related to the potential meaning of human remains in this specific area, and concerns surrounding the implied consequences regarding the identity of the victims are reflected in specific steps taken in the aftermath of the archaeological finding, namely the initial withholding of information about the findings from other interested parties and the public, and specifically the engagement of Rabbi Yacob Ruza which I will examine here in more detail. The lack of communication from the moment of finding the human remains until October 2017, when the participants of the round table were informed, was unusual, as regular exchanges, according to participants, had previously taken place. Other interested parties expressed their discomfort with these declarations more strongly: the *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau filed a criminal complaint to the public prosecutor Munich due to suspected disturbance of the dead. This complaint declares that the association was only informed of the findings of human remains after months-long delay, and furthermore, that the association never agreed to a transfer of the skeletons to

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[590] Verdery, *Political Lives of Dead Bodies*.
[591] Claire Moon, "Interpreters of the Dead: Forensic Knowledge, Human Remains, and the Politics of the Past," *Social and Legal Studies*, Vol. 22, Iss. 2 (June 2013): 149-169, 159 – 160.
[592] Verdery, *Political Lives of Dead Bodies*.
[593] Ferrandiz and Robben, *Necropolitics*.
[594] Interview Dr. Jochen Haberstroh, *Bayerisches Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege*, Nov. 8, 2018.

Dachau. Mr. Mai, a representative of the association, declared "we have been outsmarted."[595] The delayed information is significant, according to the association, as it did not allow for sufficient time to respond. While the press notice stated that the decision to transfer and rebury the human remains in a multi-religious ceremony in a nearby local cemetery was made in collaboration with victims' associations and responsible institutions, Juergen Mueller-Hohagen, the vice president of the *Lagergemeinschaft* Dachau, insisted that they were not consulted in the decision making. Mr. Nerdinger disagrees with this interpretation of events, and insists, that the press notice on October 19th 2017, was a collaborative statement of the round table, with Mr. Mai as a participant. The communication with victims' associations was responsibility of the memorial site Dachau, according to the press speaker of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism. The press notice indicated that the examination of the area had been concluded that future plans to develop the site are now a matter of the responsible planning authorities. Mr. Mai stated that he could not begin to express his horror and astonishment about the proceedings.[596]

The engagement of an Israeli expert in Jewish burial rites, Rabbi Yacob Ruza, without the knowledge of any of the victims' associations or the memorial site Dachau, to determine a possible Jewish ancestry of the human remains suggests a desire to ensure that decisions about the victims' identities were indisputable, and therefore could not be contested. The anxiety relating to the possible identity of the victims, signifies the importance of this point: Dr. Haberstroh from the Bavarian State Office for the Preservation of Heritage stated that "from a purely scientific and heritage-related perspective, it is irrelevant if these were forced laborers from Russia of non-Jewish faith, or of Jewish faith, or deported Jews from France."[597] The concern over a potential Jewish identity of the victims thus relates to the meaning and subsequent consequences such an identification would have had. Calls to not disturb the dead in their final resting place and to protect the site as heritage would have ruled out any future rezoning and development of the site. Perhaps conveniently, Rabbi Ruza came to the conclusion that no evidence suggested that the victims were Jewish, and therefore, exhumations, examinations, and reburial of the remains were possible. It is unclear which methods Rabbi Ruza applied, which findings led to his conclusion, and whether Rabbi Ruza documented his observations; indeed, the conclusion is surprising and concerning to a number of interested parties, including myself. The following evidence suggests the possibility of Jewish victims: first, Jewish persons were imprisoned on site - eye witness and survivor testimony speak to the deplorable conditions as well as abuse and killings under which many of the inmates perished; second, during the exhumations in 1950, it was specifically noted that, among other personal belongings, a Jewish bible was found; third, according to the eyewitness Mr. Hillert, who was housed in a barracks in October 1945 in close vicinity to the burial site, grave markers bore inscriptions which suggested Jewish victims; and fourth, according to Mr. Mai, evidence exists, which indicates that some of the victims from the former Allach subcamp who were interred in

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[595] Zeller, "*Fund im Ludwigsfeld: Die Toten finden keine Ruhe*." Re. Mr. Mai's statement: Mai statement indicates that he perceives as "we" those individuals and organizations who have a vested interest to not disturb the dead, and instead to create a memorial project on site; this group, according to Mai, was "outsmarted" by more powerful individuals and agencies, such as the professor Nerdinger as a representative of the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism, the owner of the property and the city of Munich, who were apparently in agreement of wanting to remove and rebury the dead as quickly as possible.

[596] Zeller, "*Fund im Ludwigsfeld*."

[597] Interview Dr. Jochen Haberstroh, *Bayerisches Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege,* Nov. 8, 2018.

the cemetery in Feldmoching in 1945 were Jewish. Mr. Mai names here specifically a local artist Paul Huml of Feldmoching who created grave tablets for these burials. The wife of the painter had kept a list of names and prisoner numbers. Additionally, Mr. Mai reports local displeasure on the part of the civilian population as well as the pastor, who apparently misplaced the original list of names: "He [the pastor] did not want Jews to be buried in his Christian cemetery. There was a dispute. This is documented in the church books, here on site…. another resident from Feldmoching was able to retrieve the list."[598] [my translation] Mr. Mai kindly shared a photograph with me, which shows several wooden grave makers from the Feldmoching cemetery, at least one of which shows the Star of David.

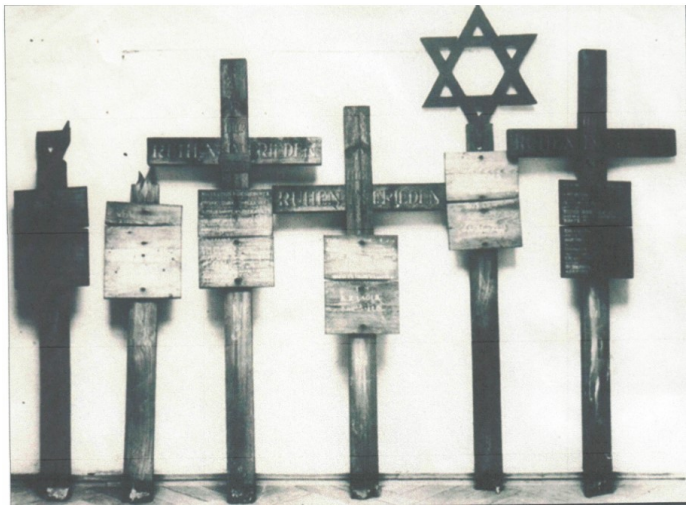
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Figure 21

The firm declaration that these victims were not Jewish also astonished other participants of the round table.[600] The exhumations of the human remains were potentially in violation of a range of possible protective laws: first, the human remains could have been protected from any manipulations by either the German *Graebergesetz* [law on graves,] which stipulates that graves in which victims of war or regimes of terror are interred must not be disturbed. [601] Yet, as it was determined that burial pits in which the remains were discovered was not an original grave, but rather a burial which had once been part of a now dissolved cemetery and furthermore, since the dead have likely previously been moved, the *Graebergesetz* did not apply in this case. Second, if the victims would have been identified as Jewish, they would have been protected under the *Halacha*, which stipulates that graves of Jewish persons must not be disturbed, except under severe threat. Finally, as Dr. Haberstroh explained, the human remains could also have been

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[598] Interview Klaus Mai, Munich, Oct. 11th, 2018.
[599] Note: this image was kindly provided to me by Klaus Mai; it is also included in his publication *Vom KZ-Aussenlager zur Neuen Siedlung Ludwigsfeld. Die zeitgeschichtliche Aufarbeitung ueber einen Ort und seiner Geschichte in der Nachbarschaft Dachaus*, self-published, 2017, p. 39. Unfortunately, the publication does not list the source of this photograph, and I cannot confirm that the grave markers are indeed from the concentration camp cemetery Karlsfeld.
[600] While some of my interviewees commented on this issue, upon their request, I removed their specific comments from this dissertation.
[601] This federal law, enacted in 1952, states that graves related to the Third Reich have to permanently remain and are to be preserved by individual states.

protected under the premise of a heritage site in the ground [*Bodendenkmal*.][602] Under this law, a skeleton can be part of a heritage site if it is part of the wider context. However, to ascribe a location the status of heritage protection requires previous detailed knowledge of the existing heritage in the ground. In the case of the Allach site, the available documentation indicated that all victims had been transferred, which subsequently led to the decision to excavate the entire area. On the other hand, according to Dr. Haberstroh, if the site would have not been excavated, it might have been possible to place it under heritage protection, however, because all existing historical structures and objects had been removed during the course of the excavations, this is no longer possible. Dr. Haberstroh suggests that the desire to develop the area for future development, which is also supported by the city of Munich, created the necessity to excavate the area.[603]

The sequential disturbances, exhumations, and reburials during the first decade after the war, as well as the sequence of events, decision-making, timing and flow of information in 2017 surrounding the discovery of the human remains highlight the unsettling agency of the dead. The subsequent exhumations and transfers, as a result of regional and local politics, point toward a perhaps universal desire by the living to create an order in their environment, in this instance, by taking control of the physical remains as well as their potential identity, by removing them from the site in order to make space for a repurposing of the area, and by moving the remains to an appropriate location, which separates the dead bodies from the little that remained of their identity they had as individuals (who at some point in the past arrived in the Allach subcamp, were they perished and were buried) to place them within a space with has been embraced as the 'proper' final resting place of all victims of the Nazi terror, namely, a specifically designated part of a local cemetery.

The choices and decisions which led to the presence of the dead in the ground in the first place, as well as subsequent actions and events illustrate the exercise of power by certain parties as well as the deliberate silencing of specific aspects of the past and the present. Four moments, or time periods, in the aftermath of the discovery of the human remains in the summer of 2017 stand out and in my interpretation, answer Foucault's 'how does it happen:' first, the involvement of and conclusion drawn by Rabbi Ruza about the identity of the victims; second, the three month period between the discovery of the skeletons in August 2017 and the notice to the press in October 2017, that although human remains had been found, evidence did not suggest the presence of a mass grave; third, the two months between the press notice in October 2017 and the final reburial of the dead in December 2017; and finally, the period since summer 2017 until the present, during which the site where the dead have been exhumed remained empty and unmarked, and offers no reference to the victims.

To conclude this chapter, I will pose Claire Moon's intriguing question: "do the dead have human rights?"[604] Moon recognizes the controversy inherent in this question, and while she acknowledges that the dead cannot claim rights nor bear responsibilities, she poses that "they can be rights holders insofar as the living behave as if they have obligations towards the dead, treat

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[602] Interview Dr. Jochen Haberstroh, *Bayerisches Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege*, Nov. 8, 2018.
[603] *Ibid*.
[604] Moon, "Interpreters of the Dead."

them as if they have rights, and confer rights upon them in practice."[605] Moon speaks specifically to the practice of identification of the dead person, which seeks to 'reunite' the dead body with the identity the person had in life, and thereby restores personhood and re-humanizes after death. With respect to the human remains which were discovered in the area of the former OT camp Karlsfeld in 2017, the separation between these individuals and their identity has been reinforced on numerous occasions, thereby underscoring the Nazi's attempts to obliterate even the last traces of their victims, and at the same time reinforcing and continuing the dehumanization of these individuals. The individuals whose remains were discovered had already suffered the loss of their personhood at the time of their death: their identity had been stripped at the point in time when they were displaced from their home and deported across the European landscape to finally arrive in the subcamp complex Allach. The circumstances and causes of death are unknown, and their anonymous interment, the absence of personal belongings and any other identity markers are all further manifestations of the separation between person and identity. While it might be argued that efforts were made to restitute their humanity through the respectful treatment of the remains as well as the multi-religious ceremony upon the occasion of the reburial in 2017, I suggest that these actions rather supported the separation between the dead and their personhood: not only have all traces of their existence been removed from the location of their original interment, all mnemonic and historical traces of these individuals have been further severed through the decision to not involve and inform the public. Thus, through unilateral decisions made by individuals – who by virtue of their professional and/or personal background and heritage might be considered to be "implicated" – with respect to the identity of the dead without the inclusion of other interested parties and stakeholders, the disenfranchisement of these victims is continued and affirmed.[606] The inclusion of interested parties and stakeholders might have offered opportunities for further in-depth research, such as through genetic testing, or lead to other outcomes relating to the treatment of the dead bodies.

Indeed, the numerous decisions which were made over the decades by local and state institutions, experts and professionals, have firmly served to protect the interests of the living, at the expense of the humanity of the dead. As has been desired by these interested parties, silence has settled, yet again, over the area of the former forced labor camp where no trace of their existence has remained. Their remains have joined the vast nameless masses of victims of the Third Reich in a specific area of a local cemetery, thereby assigning them the place which the local memorial culture as designated as appropriate: away from the living, out of sight and mind. Martin Pollack in his disturbing and impactful work *Kontaminierte Landschaften* [contaminated landscapes] says of the nameless dead:

> "[…] nobody will light a candle at their last resting place, lay down flowers or wreaths, speak a prayer, in whichever language. This blatant violation of all common traditions and rites through which the unmistakable identity of the dead is celebrated during the funeral is an expression of the deep contempt of the victims which is thereby extended beyond death…[t]he anonymity of the victims, although it is difficult to imagine a more intimate and personal experience than a violent death, falsifies our knowledge of the Holocaust […]

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[605] Claire Moon, "What remains? Human rights after death," in *Ethical Approaches to Human Remains: A Global Challenge in Bioarchaeology and Forensic Anthropology*, ed. Kirsty Squires, David Errickson, Nicholas Marquez-Grant (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020), 39 – 58, 43.
[606] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*.

> after all, concrete humans were murdered, and also the perpetrators were concrete persons."[607] [my translation]

The significant link between the site of the former OT camp Karlsfeld - the final resting place of the twelve individuals whose remains were discovered in 2017 – the history of the corporation BMW, and the death of former prisoners has been effectively severed; after their removal from the Ludwigsfeld and their reburial at the *Waldfriedhof* in 2017, the dead have been taken out of this wider context which in some ways still provided these individuals with traces of personhood and identity, in that they were linked to a specific site and events. As anonymous gravesites at the *Waldfriedhof*, even these last connections to their lives and deaths have been removed, and nothing points to the specific individual contexts and journeys through which these persons found their death in the subcamp complex Allach. While visitors to the *Waldfriedhof* may light candles or lay wreaths or flowers at their gravesites, nothing is known about these dead except that they have joined the millions of other victims of the Third Reich. Amongst the many disturbing and unsettling aspects of this site's history, the bleak, empty desolation of the area in which the human remains were discovered impacted me perhaps most significantly. The deserted, rubble-strewn landscape of the archaeological excavation in the Ludwigsfeld, surrounded by a mesh wire fence, provided to me perhaps the most poignant and tangible manifestation of the impact and consequences of the merciless destruction of the victims. Even though the removal of the remains may suggest that the landscape has been 'cleared' of all aspects of human suffering and death, the dead cannot be truly separated from their final resting place. Through biological processes, the dead bodies and the surrounding soil have merged and cannot be truly separated. Indeed, perhaps the remaining traces of the victims' materiality can be understood as an aspect of the palimpsests of the site itself: even though perhaps invisible to the human eye, the fragments of human remains which have remained on site nevertheless continue to exist and can only continue to do so if they remain untouched. The materiality of the dead bodies and the local landscape have become inseparable, and as such, the dead have become part of the *genius loci*.[608]

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[607] Martin Pollack, *Kontaminierte Landschaften* (Salzburg-Gnigl: Residenz Verlag, 2014), 28 to 66 [my translation].

[608] Casey, "Keeping the Past in Mind." Casey notes: "Place in its landscape being imparts itself on me, permeates me. And, as the 'spirit of place', the genius loci, enters me, the visible becomes increasingly invisible," 88.

CHAPTER 6. Situating difficult heritage in a corporate space: the memory of forced labour in the BMW museum

> "Yet the voiceless millions and each of their individual stories remain elusive; we *know* they were there but it is difficult to hear them, no matter how hard we search for their voices. There were simply too many victims and too few traces of their lives. The 'phantom industry' has silenced its victims in their lifetimes and therefore made their voices and memories largely unrecoverable to history […] how can one make the silent speak again, without imposing our own voices over their stories? How can the memories of the silent be represented?" (Dessingué and Winter, 2016)[609]

(Fieldnotes, BMW museum Munich, beginning of October 2018): I had just finished my first tour of the BMW museum, and was on my way to the museum's Café, when I noticed the gift shop, which piqued my interest. Curious if the corporation's apparent commitment to address its dark past would extend beyond the there-but-not-there presentation in the museum, I entered the store in search for books on forced labour, BMW during the Third Reich, anything along those lines – after all, a couple of publications have been produced and endorsed by BMW and I thought that these might be available for purchase. To best honest, I did not really expect to find any such books. The shop offered exactly what one would expect in a corporate museum gift shop: rows upon rows of books about all aspects imaginable relating to cars and motorcycles, gadgets and gizmos, the usual assemblage of souvenirs, but nothing even remotely related to the topics I was interested in. To dot my i's and cross my t's, I approached the salesperson behind the counter and asked about the availability of such publications, specifically those which had

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[609] Alexandre Dessingué and Jay Winter (eds) *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance* (Routledge, 2016) 184-185.

been endorsed by BMW. The individual seemed taken aback by my question and could only inform me that they were unaware of any such materials. I left the store to visit the Café and felt oddly defeated. Was I expecting too much? Was it absurd to want to see information on this dark past not only being displayed in a token gesture, but instead offered to interested customers, or perhaps to even inspire an interest in unaware visitors? The experience of the self-absorbed sparkling celebration of the brand in the museum seemed to be at absolute odds with the abandoned and forgotten space I had visited just days before in the Ludwigsfeld, and somehow it seemed morbid and inappropriate to pursue my interest and perhaps obsession with the fate of those who had perished in the Allach in this temple to progress and capitalism.

Why would a globally highly successful German car manufacturer represent its difficult heritage of exploiting and profiting off slave laborers during the Third Reich in its corporate museum? How would such a representation take shape in the corporate meta-narrative of technological success and progress? How do capitalism and corporate philosophy intersect with difficult heritage? What is the relationship between a corporate museum and its brand, and consumer behaviour? Can (difficult) heritage be used to enhance customer loyalty by affirming the consumer that the corporation is open and regretful about its wrong-doings? These were the questions which guided my exploration of the BMW corporate museum in Munich in the autumn of 2018. More specifically, my questions related to the representation of the use of forced laborers, concentration camp prisoners and Jewish slave laborers in the company's Allach camp, a subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp.

While the fields of memory, heritage, and museum studies have considerably advanced our understanding of the processes of collective remembering and forgetting, the institution of the corporate museum, their social functions, organizational or corporate memory, brand authenticity and legitimacy, particular possibilities and limitations, the relationship between corporate museums, heritage (and more specifically difficult heritage), and external and internal memory discourses has remained largely neglected.[610] Furthermore, specifically the issue of representations of difficult heritage in a corporate context has not yet received the same scholarly attention as, for example, national museums.

My discussion of the representation of forced labor in the BMW museum will build on the theory of types of silences proposed by Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger: overt silences, according to the authors, refer to the literal absence of speech or narrative, while covert silences are silences which are "covered and veiled by much mnemonic talk and representation. Such silences

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[610] Bonti, Mariacristina, *The Corporate Museums and Their Social Function: Some Evidence from Italy*, "European Scientific Journal," special edition Vol. 1 (Nov. 2014); Casey, Andrea, *Organizational Identity and Memory: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, "Routledge Studies in Management, Organizations and Society," (Routledge, New York, 2019); Ehmann, Sven, Sofia Borges (ed) *Branded Spaces: Branded Architecture and the Future of Retail* (Gestalten, 2013); Klingmann, Anna. *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (MIT Press, 2007); James Lane, "Oral History and Industrial Heritage Museums," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 80, Iss. 2 (Sept. 1993): 607 – 618; Jons Messedat, *Corporate Museums* (Germany: AV Edition GmbH, 2012); Nick Nissley and Andrea Casey, "The Politics of the Exhibition: Viewing Corporate Museums Through the Paradigmatic Lens of Organizational Memory," *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 13, Iss. 2 (Sep. 2002): 35 – 45; Piatkowska, Ksenia K. "The corporate museum: A new type of museum created as a component of company marketing," *International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, Vol. 6, Iss. 2 (Dec. 2012): 29 – 37; Xu, Xianya, *Corporate Museum: From Industry Identity to Exhibition Communication* (Altralinea, 2017); Schrempf-Stirling, Judith, Guido Palazzo, Robert A. Phillips, "Historic Corporate Social Responsibility," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 41, Iss. 4 (2016): 700 – 719.

are not about the complete absence of talk, ritual or practice. Rather, they are about the absence of content."[611] Covert silences may be subtle and manifest "through issues that are hinted at but not explored."[612] As the museum is embedded into a socio-cultural, political and economic context, discourses of silence or absence in a museal context may change over time in response to societal changes, specific, formerly unacknowledged aspects of the past, become 'visible.'[613] Visibility can occur in visual, textual and spatial forms within a museal exhibition.

In the context of this chapter, I am interested in which aspects of its difficult past are represented or absent in the BMW museum. In the following sections, I will first examine the role and function of the corporate museum; second, I will introduce the BMW corporate museum and its social and physical situatedness in the context of Munich; third, I will discuss the representation of forced labour in the BMW museum; and fourth, I will examine the use of perpetrator photographs in the context of the BMW museum. By exploring these aspects, I seek to investigate the role of silence in the BMW corporate museum not in its function as 'forgetting,' but rather how an institutional silence has changed over time in response to societal and internal shifts. In addition to my research in the museum, I conducted interviews with Dr. Manfred Grunert, in his previous role as BMW Group Classic director of archive, collection and classic brand, and Mr. Stefan Braun, press speaker of the BMW Group Classic. Dr. Andreas Braun, the curator of the BMW museum, kindly answered questions via email, while the BMW Group board of directors, namely Mr. Ralph Huber, director of group communications and politic, and Mr. Markus Appelhans, director of archive and collection, graciously answered my questions in a letter.

1. The corporate museum: capitalism, heritage, identity, and customer-loyalty

Museums, as previously established, are perceived as highly trustworthy sources of objective information and their authority justifies the selection, display and interpretation of specific narratives. Corporate museums are so far under-studied but intriguing hybrids, combining the educational mission of the traditional museum, as well as historical elements with a "spectacular and re-enchanted commercial environment" which offers extraordinary experiences.[614] At the most fundamental level a corporate museum preserves a company's history and memory. Through the preservation of its memory and identity, the corporate museum mirrors the function of history museums; indeed, the argument can be made that because companies are participants of history, their histories may be perceived as an aspect of human history.[615] Some corporate museums have the responsibility to function as history museums due to the company's significance in the field. While arguably both, history museums and corporate museums have a degree of self-interest in that history and national museums often focus on celebratory and positive identity-forming aspects, a key aspect which sets the corporate museum apart from

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[611] Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered, Chana Teeger, "Unpacking the Unspoken: Silence in Collective Memory and Forgetting," *Social Forces*, Vol. 88, Iss. 3 (March 2010): 1103-1122, 1104; Dessingue, Alexandre and Jay Winter (eds) *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance* (Routledge, 2016); Ricoeur, Paul, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (University of Chicago Press, 2009); Rhiannon Mason and Joanne Sayner, "Bringing museal silence into focus: eight ways of thinking about silence in museums," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 25, Iss. 1 (2019): 5-20; Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger, "Unpacking the Unspoken."
[612] *Ibid*., 1112.
[613] Mason and Sayner, "Bringing museal silence into focus."
[614] Pulh, Mencarelli, and Chaney "The consequences of the heritage experience," 2193.
[615] Nissley and Casey, "The Politics of the Exhibition," 53.

traditional museums is its innate self-interest of a capitalist organization, which seeks to 'write' its history through the lens of its brand.[616] At the same time, through its connection with a corporation, it is not limited in its exhibitions by the same constraints which often limit museums, such as funding.

Historically, early company museums – often referred to as industrial heritage museums – began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century, but corporate museums as tourist destinations and as a communicative tool began to evolve during the 1980s and 1990s.[617] Corporate museums are as diverse as their businesses, spanning from the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin, the Hershey Story, the World of Coca-Cola, the Harley-Davidson Museum and the Walmart Museum in the US, the Cupnoodles Museum in Japan, the IKEA museum in Sweden, to the Steiff Museum, the Dr. Oetker World, and Villeroy & Boch in Germany. Corporate museums have long been recognized to be a "magnificent tools to connect the visitor to the celebrated brand on an emotional level, to make the visitor become part of the greater whole, to transport him to a parallel universe where everything revolves around the brand."[618] The intent of the corporate museum goes beyond merely providing historical information on how the brand evolved; rather, the museums seeks to connect the public to their products and brand through emotional involvement.

While early corporate museums mainly illustrated the company's history - including significant individuals, milestones and key events - and used objects, documents and images to illustrate the company's evolution - contemporary corporate museums seek to provide visitors with an experience: rather than simply providing cultural and historical information, museums have become a key aspect of the tourism and leisure industry which provides 'edutainment.'[619] Similarly, Gerhard Schulze coined the term "*Erlebnissgesellschaft*" or "experience economy," in which enterprises provide visitors with "unforgettable experiences" which in turn become memorable for the visitor.[620] At the same time, individuals determine their worth based on experiences related to their lifestyles and leisure behaviours.[621] Companies began to develop corporate museums in response to these societal changes, in which the experience is regarded as a product.[622]

The process of historical story-telling about the company's past remains a vital aspect of corporate museums: research identifies company museums as "specific kinds of flagship stores that include both a commercial and a heritage experience." Not dissimilar to the store, the brand museum is overtly commercial, with a gift store, advertising, brand-oriented cultural artifacts and entertainment, through multi-sensory interactive displays."[623]

Yet, there are notably differences between a brand store and a corporate museum; arguably

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[616] *Ibid*., 53 – 54.
[617] Lane, "Oral History and Industrial Heritage Museums."
[618] Ursula Kampmann, "Corporate Museums: How to use history as a tool for branding,"13.11.2013, *CoinsWeekly,* https://coinsweekly.com/corporate-museums-how-to-use-history-as-a-tool-for-branding/ Accessed Feb. 15, 2020.
[619] Gail Anderson, *Reinventing the museum: Historical and con-temporary perspectives on the paradigm shift* (Altamira Walnut Creek,CA, 2004); Neil Kotler, Phillip Kotler, and Wendy Kotler, *Museum marketing and strategy* (2nd ed.) (San Francisco, CA: Wiley, 2008); Remi Mencarelli, Severine Marteaux, and Mathilde Pulh, "Museums, consumers, and on-site experiences," *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, Vol. 28, Iss. 3 (2010): 330–348; Pi-Chu Wu, "Make a loyal visitor: a study of leisure experience at Farglory corporate museum in Taiwan," *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 22, Iss. 5 (2017): 554-564.
[620] Wu, "Make a loyal visitor," 554.
[621] Gerhard Schulze, *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft: Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart* (Campusverlag, 2005).
[622] Xu, *Corporate Museum*, 7-9.
[623] Mathilde Pulh, Remi Mencarelli, and Damien Chaney "The consequences of the heritage experience in brand museums on the consumer-brand relationship," *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53, Iss. 10 (2019): 2193-2212, 2194.

one of the most significant aspects lies in the cultural capital of the museum, which, as discussed above, is perceived to be a trustworthy educational institution. As illustrated by Pulh et al, visitors do not differentiate between corporate museums and traditional museums: visitors "do not perceive he brand museum as a place developed by the brand for extrinsic material benefits. Visitors recognize the heritage values of the brand museum, and in consequence the brand as a heritage artifact."[624] As a result, through the experience of intimacy with the brand as heritage, customers are willing to support the brand.

In their exploration of the relationship between brand museums, consumers, and the role of the 'heritage experience,' Pulh et al found strong evidence that this experience has direct and strong impact on the emergence as well as strength of the consumer-brand relationship.[625] Through an emphasis on its heritage "the brand proposes a very specific experience that deserves attention because it is based on memory and communal identity through the transmission of the resulting collective memories." This, in turn has a direct impact on the "type and intensity of the relationship between the brand and the consumers."[626] Not only does a chronology of the past allow a narration which connects the past with the present, but it also offers an opportunity to present how the company has learned from past failures and errors, and how it has successfully overcome obstacles. This format of storyelling is not dissimilar to history museums with the exception that the corporate history is organized around its own timeline.[627] Furthermore, through the staging of its heritage, "the brand makes its history, know-how, and symbols accessible to consumers in a transmission logic whose message is 'this is your heritage.'" Thus, by sharing and inviting visitors to participate in its history, the corporate museum creates an intimacy between the consumer and the abstract concept of the brand: regardless of the familiarity of the visitor with the brand, "the experience of visiting a brand museum creates, almost systematically, a real sense of intimacy with the brand."[628] Through the experience of intimacy by learning about the company's heritage a bond is created between the visitor/(potential) customer and the brand, which, in turn, is reflected in specific supportive behaviours by the consumer, such as purchasing (for example, in the gift shop or of the brand products); through commitment, such as repeat purchases, as well as through ambassadorship, such as sharing their experiences with their social networks.

The connection between specific corporate museums and their respective physical local context cannot be underestimated: the choice of a corporate museum in the company's hometown functions as a tribute to the local community, where it "grew and flourished in the rich 'soil' of the local culture," while at the same time, the corporate museum functions as a major tourist attraction.[629] A corporate museum also tells a local story, in that it links its own history with the history of a specific place and era. As such, the corporate museum reinforces its relationship with the local culture and historical context of the location. On a similar note, Paitkowska points to the significance of the architecture of corporate museums, which serve to reflect and promote the brand's identity as well as the high quality of the brand's products.[630]

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[624] Pulh, Mencarelli, and Chaney "The consequences of the heritage experience," 2205.
[625] *Ibid*., 2203.
[626] *Ibid*., 2194.
[627] Nissley and Casey, "The Politics of the Exhibition."
[628] Pulh, Mencarelli, and Chaney "The consequences of the heritage experience," 2202.
[629] Xu, *Corporate Museum*, 63.
[630] Ksenia Paitkowska, "The Corporate Museum: A New Type of Museum Created as a Component of Company Marketing," *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, Vol. 6, Iss. 2 (2014): 29-37.

The use of unique signature architecture allows the corporation function as a recognizable element in a city's marketing image as well as a recognizable local landmark, thereby further strengthening its connection with the regional and city's context.[631]

As illustrated in this discussion, the relationship between the corporate museum and its brand, the role of heritage, and the consumer is complex, however, it is clear that the visitation of a corporate museum has direct impact on consumer behaviour and loyalty. This aspect, thus, has to be taken into consideration of why and how corporations would choose to incorporate their difficult heritage into a capitalist marketplace.

In the 21st century, corporate museums have increasingly assumed the functions of traditional museums in that they engage with social and cultural affairs.[632] For example, the Mercedes Benz museum in Stuttgart has offered summer concerts, open air cinema and concerts, while the Volkswagen *AutoMuseum* in Wolfsburg has hosted various lectures, charity concerts, and the Porsche museum in Stuttgart presented photography courses for a young audience. Not only does this demonstrate the strategies used by the corporate museums to engage with the public, but it also reflects the company's awareness of its public responsibility.[633] In turn, the public participates in the exhibit or events at the corporate museum in a communal experience, thereby engaging with the company in ways which are memorable and dynamic and go beyond simply sharing knowledge about the company's history.

Yet, while corporate museums have adopted similar strategies to serve, educate and entertain the public as traditional museums, the ultimate purpose of the corporate museum is to enhance the specific brand and support its private interests.[634]

2. The BMW corporate museum in Munich

BMW Headquarter and cauldron (museum) [635]

BMW Welt in front, in background BMW Headquarter and museum [636]

Figure 22

The BMW museum in Munich is without question impressive, awe-inspiring and entertaining. The significance of the corporation is communicated already from the outside: upon emerging

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[631] Ibid., 2012.
[632] Xu, *Corporate Museum*, 51.
[633] Ibid., 51.
[634] Ibid., 61.
[635] *BMW Welt*, "Experience BMW Welt and BMW Museum with your senses," https://www.bmw-welt.com/en.html Accessed May 3, 2020.
[636] *Destination Munich*, "BMW Welt," https://www.destination-munich.com/BMW-welt.html Accessed May 3, 2020.

from the *U-Bahn* station *Olympiazentrum*, I walk along *Lerchenauer Strasse*; as I pass several production halls on my left, I gaze to my right at the monumental, futuristic and astonishing BMW Welt – an adventure museum, event venue, and what is effectively a showroom for cars and motorcycles, which opened in 2007 – which is positioned vis-a-vis the older, but nevertheless iconic BMW headquarter, which represents the cylinder head of a four-cylinder engine, and the silver cauldron – or 'salad bowl', as it is affectionately referred to by locals – which houses the company's museum. Creating a visual triangle between the two BMW complexes, on the other side of the *Petuelring*, is the Olympic park, with its remarkable plexi-glass-covered stadium and the unmistakable Olympic tower, built in 1972, thereby creating effectively an assemblage of architectural icons while at the same time weaving an inseparable connection between locally and historically significant events and players.
Visiting the BMW museum, as New York Times author Stephen Williams has put it so poignantly, is to "immerse yourself into BMW's corporate culture."[637] The museum is all one would expect from a multinational producer of stylish luxury cars, and it dazzles and fascinates its visitors through a dynamic performance of space, technology, effects and design strategies.

One of the first features inside the museums which catches the eye is a mesmerizing kinetic sculpture titled "[t]he shape of things to come," consisting of 714 steel balls, which performs a form-finding process in seven-minute sequences, playfully moving through different shapes of vehicles. [638]

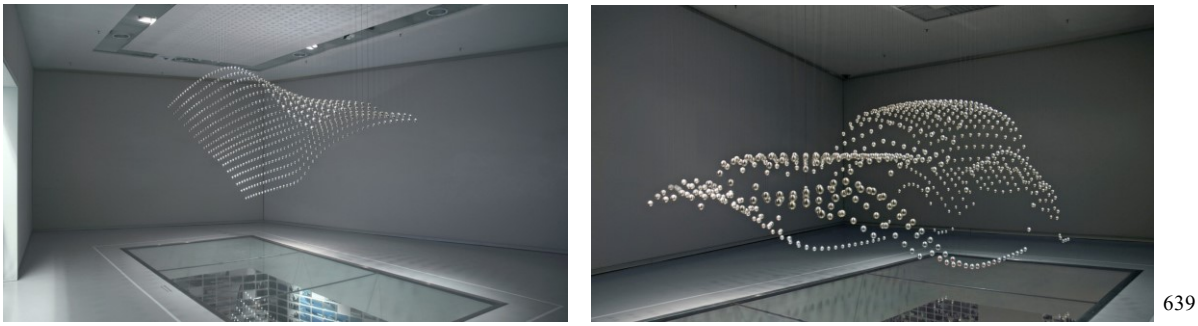
639

Figure 23

The non-linear layout of the museum consists of several 'houses' or thematically organized areas which are linked by walkways, ramps and squares, as well as the cauldron. Although the museum was originally created in 1973, the permanent exhibition has been completely renovated and reopened in 2008. Within the cauldron, a spiral-shaped ramp takes the visitor up to the top of the structure.

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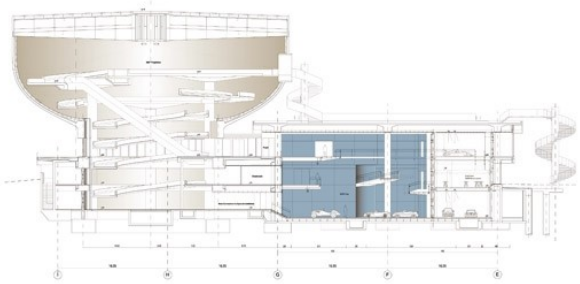
[637] Stephen Williams, "Touring the Temples of German Automaking," December 31, 2009, *New York Times*, https://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/03/automobiles/03museums.html Accessed February 1, 2020.
[638] "Kinetic Sculpture," *Art + Com Studios*, http://artcom.de/en/project/kinetic-sculpture/ Accessed April 1, 2020.
[639] *Ibid.*



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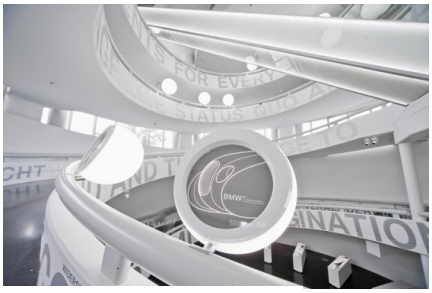

641

Inside of cauldron: a spiral leads the visitor to the top of the structure.

Figure 24

The museum follows a chronological narrative of progress, which reaches from BMW's aircraft engines to motorsports, cars, and motorcycles. The visitor path follows a literal and metaphorical journey along several decades of vehicle models along an upward-curving spiral, featuring technological developments as well as the company's growth and expansion, until it cumulates at the top of the cauldron with the very latest, futuristic BMW car models. All in all, the museum is, naturally, a celebration of the company's successes and accomplishments, its technology, environmental consciousness, social engagement, and by following the company's narrative of progress along the physically upward-curving spiral, the visitor cannot help but be dazzled as they gaze at the latest sparkling car models which would not be out of place in a James Bond movie. Administratively, the museum is part of the corporation, but in contrast to other corporate museums, it is not its own company. The BMW attracts a very heterogenous audience with approximately 80% international visitors, the majority male. The average visitor spends between 1.5 to 2 hours at the museum.[642]

Reviews on Tripadvisor praise the museum variably as an "amazing," "really cool," "excellent" and "superb" experience, while one reviewer specifically appreciated to learn about the company's development as well as the "historical and political impact."[643] Traveler Alexandra Korey – or Arttrav – who shares her experiences on her blog, notes that "had I not gone in loving BMW, I would have come out doing so. This is an experience not just for "car guys", luxury

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[640] "Architonic," *Atelier Brueckner*, https://www.architonic.com/en/project/atelier-bruckner-bmw-museum-munich/5100476 Accessed May 3, 2020.
[641] Left image: my own photograph, Munich, October 9, 2018; right image: "Architonic," Atelier Brueckner.
[642] Email Dr. Andreas Braun, BMW Group, April 15, 2019.
[643] "Reviews BMW Museum," *TripAdvisor,* https://www.tripadvisor.ca/Attraction_Review-g187309-d190264-Reviews-BMW_Museum-Munich_Upper_Bavaria_Bavaria.html Accessed February 15, 2020.

lovers and engineers, but for anyone interested in architecture, design and history."[644] Since the BMW museum is located directly next to BMW world and the BMW production plant, visitors can extend their stay, and thereby enhance their experience: BMW world, noted to be "the most visited tourist attraction in town," offers visitors a "journey through the BMW Welt experience," while at the plant, visitors can follow the production from the press shop to the assembly over 12 halls.[645] According to an email exchange with Mr. Andreas Braun, the museum's curator, by offering information about the company's history as well its brands, the museum's intent is to create enthusiasm for historical BMW vehicles. Mr. Braun hopes that satisfied visitors will enjoy their leisure time in the company's space and learn something new about the company and its products. The BMW museum follows the statutes as they are laid out by ICOM, specifically with respect to the ethical guidelines, which includes the representation of the role of the company during the Third Reich, although Mr. Braun did not elaborate on this aspect any further. The museum received several national and international prices for appealing productions, among them the Award of the Art Director Club. Mr. Braun emphasizes, that profitability is not a goal of the museum.[646]

3. The company as a local asset

The relationship between the prominent car manufacturer and the Bavarian state capital Munich has deep roots. The company pays tribute to its hometown Munich and its home state Bavaria in name and design: the corporation's name – *Bayerische Motoren Werke*/BMW [Bavarian motor works] – ensures that anywhere around the globe, the very brand name links the vehicle with the German state. The company's logo resembles a rotating aircraft propeller, while the white and blue fields represent the blue and white colours of the Bavarian flag.[647] This logo is clearly visible on the BMW headquarter building, as well as on top of the cauldron, visible from the sky.

[648]

Figure 25

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[644] "BMW Museum and World: Brand Storytelling in Munich", April 26, 2018, *Arttrav*, https://www.arttrav.com/eu/bmw-museum-world/ Accessed April 1, 2020.
[645] "Reviews BMW Welt," *TripAdvisor*, https://www.tripadvisor.ca/ShowUserReviews-g187309-d856420-r515318485-BMW_Welt-Munich_Upper_Bavaria_Bavaria.html Accessed April 1, 2020; "The history of the BMW Group: 100 years of fascination for mobility," *BMW Group*, 03.03.2016 2016 https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/article/detail/T0257819EN/the-history-of-the-bmw-group:-100-years-of-fascination-for-mobility?language=en Accessed April 1, 2020.
[646] Email Dr. Andreas Braun, BMW Group, April 15, 2019; BMW Group," LinkedIn, https://www.linkedin.com/company/bmw-group/?originalSubdomain=de Accessed April 10, 2020.

Today, with its four brands – BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce, and BMW motorcycle – the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles. The global production network stretches across 15 countries, while the global sales network reaching 140 countries. In 2018, the BMW Group sold over 2,490,000 passenger vehicles, and over 165,000 motorcycles worldwide. Profit before tax in 2018 was 9,815 billion Euro on revenues of 97,480 billion Euro. In the same year, the BMW Group employed 134,682 workers. In 2017, the company employed 43,206 workers in the greater Munich region, although this does not include other jobs, such as suppliers and service personnel. The company's profit also benefits the city of Munich: in 2011, the corporation increased its trade tax advance payments by 223 million euros.[649] The annual trade tax of BMW amounts to approximately 1/5th of the entire trade tax, and 1/8th of the city's tax income.[650] The BMW Group is the third largest of seven DAX companies [*Deutscher Aktienindex* – German stock index,] after Siemens and Allianz. While BMW contributes to city's economy as a taxpayer, employer and as a visitor attraction, it also provides services to the wider local public: since 1997, BMW Munich is the sponsor of the annual event "*Oper fuer alle*" [Opera for all,] in a partnership with the Bavarian State Opera. In 2019, this event was attended by 160,000 opera fans free of charge. A similar format is repeated by the BMW Group in Berlin, London, and Moscow.[651] In 2015, BMW Munich started a project to provide 40 refugees with a nine-week praxis-program to support their social and professional integration, with the intention to expand the program to 500;[652] in 2016, BMW Munich accepted 8 refugees between the ages of 17 to 23 years to gain the qualifications to begin an apprenticeship.[653] Internationally, BMW has been engaged as a sponsor of an exhibition at various Guggenheim museums; the Group also sponsors various events, such as the PGA Championship, the Italian Open, the South Africa national rugby union team, and functions as the official partners of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.[654]

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[649] *Merkur*, "*BMW macht Muenchen ein Steuergeschenk*," 08.12. 2011. https://www.merkur.de/lokales/muenchen/stadt-muenchen/macht-muenchen-steuer-geschenk-1523011.html Accessed April 20, 2020.

[650] Maximilian Gerl and Max Haegler, "*BMW Zentrum in Muenchen: Wie muenchnerisch ist BMW*?" 07.10.2017, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/bmw-zentrum-wie-wichtig-ist-bmw-fuer-muenchen-1.3698445-2 Accessed April 20, 2020.

[651] "*Ueber 160,000 Klassikfans*," 21.07.2019, *PressClub BMW Group*, https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/deutschland/article/detail/T0298984DE/ueber-160-000-klassikfans-kamen-dank-bmw-muenchen-in-den-kostenlosen-genuss-von-%E2%80%9Eoper-fuer-alle%E2%80%9C-2019-erstmals-dirigierte-kirill-petrenko-live-uebertragung-und-festspielkonzert?language=de Accessed April 20, 2020.

[652] "*BMW Group unterstuetzt 500 Fluechtlinge*," 19.11.2011, *PressClub BMW Group*, https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/deutschland/article/detail/T0243842DE/bmw-group-unterstuetzt-500-fluechtlinge-bei-der-sozialen-und-beruflichen-integration?language=de Accessed April 20, 2020.

[653] "*Junge Fluechtlinge beginnen Einstiegsqualifizierungen*," 21.01.2016, *PressClubBMW Group*, https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/deutschland/article/detail/T0251842DE/junge-fluechtlinge-beginnen-einstiegsqualifizierung-bei-der-bmw-group?language=de Accessed April 20, 2020.

[654] C.G. "The BMW Guggenheim Lab," August 8, 2012, *Economist*, https://www.economist.com/prospero/2012/08/08/an-urban-experiment-that-nearly-failed Accessed May 3, 2020; *BMW championship*, https://bmwchampionship.com, Accessed May 3, 2020; *BMW Golfsport*, https://www.bmw-golfsport.com/en/topics/turniere/bmw-partnerschaften.html Accessed May 3, 2020; *BMW Group PressClub South Africa*, "BMW South Africa throws down the gauntlet for Rugby fans," 15.08.2013, https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/south-africa/article/detail/T0144836EN/bmw-south-africa-throws-down-the-gauntlet-for-rugby-fans?language=en Accessed May 3, 2020; "BMW i official partner of Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival," 10.04.2019, BMW Group PressClub Canada, https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/canada/article/detail/T0294428EN/bmw-i-official-partner-of-coachella-valley-music-and-arts-festival-2019?language=en Accessed May 3, 2020.

4. The city and the corporation

The connection between the history of the city of Munich, the memory of the Nazi era, and the development of modern architecture, such as the BMW headquarter, deserves specific attention. Bavaria underwent significant economic and social changes after 1945, and over the course of only two decades, the formerly largely agricultural state transformed into a centre for high-tech industries which, today, employ 12.4% of the workforce – the highest percentage in Europe.[655] On the one hand, the free state of Bavaria sought to (re)connect with a nostalgically and positively imagined past, which was emphasized through the reconstruction of historical buildings; at the same time, with an increasing prosperity and stability, between the late 1950s to the early 1970s, modern architecture found increasing acceptance as it articulated a rise of optimism and faith in progress. During this time, Munich underwent a rapid phase of urban modernization, which resulted in the creation of new high-rise buildings, such as the BMW headquarters.[656]

In 1966, Munich was awarded the Olympic games. Rather poignantly, a location which was known as the *Truemmerberg* [rubble pile] was chosen at the site for this event. The rubble pile had been erected from the ruins caused by the bombings during the Second World War. The construction for the games continued until 1972, and the project exemplifies the desire of many locals to celebrate and promote a Germany but also a Munich which had abolished and recovered from its Nazi past. This desire, according to Rosenfeld, is reflected in the architecture of the Olympic complex, which sought to present "an atmosphere of openness, transparency, and clarity," while buildings were embedded in the pleasant natural landscape, which now covered the rubble pile, "so that their visually perceptible magnitude is reduced."[657]



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Figure 26

With increasing prosperity and modernism, the city of Munich underwent a change in its identity from a provincial and traditional town toward a modern and cosmopolitan centre, while its entanglement with the Nazi era became concurrently ever more marginalized. Munich became the

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655 John Hooper, "The laptop and lederhosen formula," September 2, 2002, *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/sep/02/germany.eu Accessed May 2, 2018.
656 Rosenfeld, "Architecture and the Memory of Nazism."
657 "Gesprach mit Guenther Behnisch," in *Architektur in der Bundesrepublik* Heinrich Klotz (Frankfurt, 1977), 26-28, cited in Rosenfeld, "Architecture and the Memory of Nazism.," 149.
658 "*Muenchen – Olympische Bauten*," *Wikipedia*, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:M%C3%BCnchen_-_Olympische_Bauten.jpg and https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:2006_Olympiaberg_in_Muenchen.JPG Accessed May 3, 2020.

richest, fastest-growing, most culturally ambitious city in the Federal Republic. Its growth rate was twice that of any other major German city and it soon surpassed the industrial output of Essen and Duesseldorf.[659] Today, Bavaria has one of the largest economies of any region in Germany or even in Europe and is one of the two richest states in Germany.[660] Bavaria is Germany's most popular tourist destination, with around 8.5 million foreign visitors per year.[661] Targeting both tourists as well as Bavarian citizens, the state of Bavaria cultivates and perpetuates a highly romanticized image of natural landscapes and historical buildings dating back to the *Wittelsbacher* monchary, along with cultural peculiarities, such as festivals, 'traditional' dress and cuisine.

Building on Rosenfield's analysis of architecture and memory, specifically in the context of Munich, the constellation of the ultra-modern architecture of the Olympic park and the BMW complex is not coincidental. The design of both landmarks (individually and together) provide a notable counterweight to the architecturally traditional city centre. By literally covering the remains of the rubble of the Second World War with the Olympic park, and through the creation of dynamic modern architecture, this part of Munich's cityscape indeed speaks to a very different Bavaria, if not Germany, while effectively leaving its dark legacy behind. As on a material level nothing in this area of the city indicates the distant and more recent past, it is quite possible to revel in the promises of democracy and modernity. It is in this specific historic and mnemonic context, that I will discuss the representation of forced labor in the BMW corporate museum.

5. Representing difficult heritage in the corporate museum

In June 2008, the BMW museum was re-opened after a four-year long renovation. The exhibition space had increased from the original ca. 1,000 square metres in 1973, to about 5,000 square metres. Within this vast immersive space of visual attractions, the representation of the difficult heritage of forced labour are not obvious, and require to be actively sought out by the visitor. Information on this topic appears in two separate areas in the museum, and both sections require the visitor to leave the visitor path, and to engage directly and closely with the subject matter by either scrolling through a touch screen menu, or by looking at a catalogue.

The room "*VISIONEN. Treibende Kraft. Gestern. Heute. Morgen*." [Visions. Driving force. Yesterday. Today. Tomorrow.] is a space which is visually divided into eras, ranging from 1928 to the present. Wall-mounted touch screens invite visitors to detailed information about specific times by scrolling through several slides.

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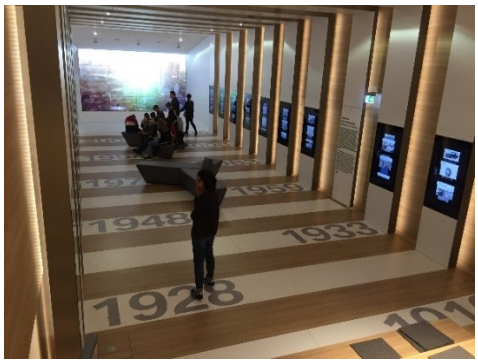
[659] Large, David Clay, *Where Ghosts Walked: Munich's Road to the Third Reich* (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 1997), 348.
[660] *Deutsche Handwerks Zeitung*, "*Das sind die reichsten Regionen Deutschlands*," 09.12.2016, https://www.deutsche-handwerks-zeitung.de/das-sind-die-reichsten-regionen-deutschlands/150/3093/342137 Accessed May 1, 2018.
[661] Bill Alen, "German tourism heading for another record year," November 13, 2017, *Tourism Review*, https://www.tourism-review.com/german-tourism-steadily-growing-news10370 Accessed May 5, 2018.



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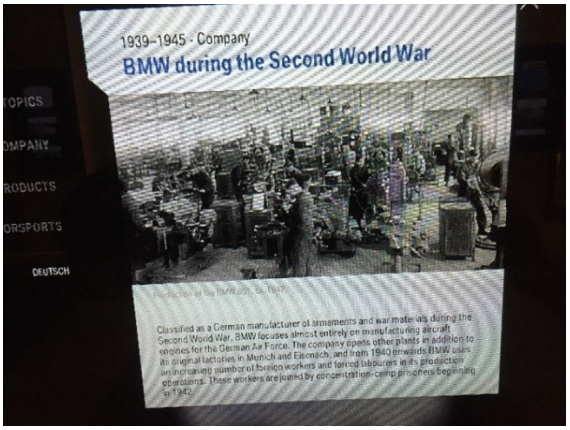
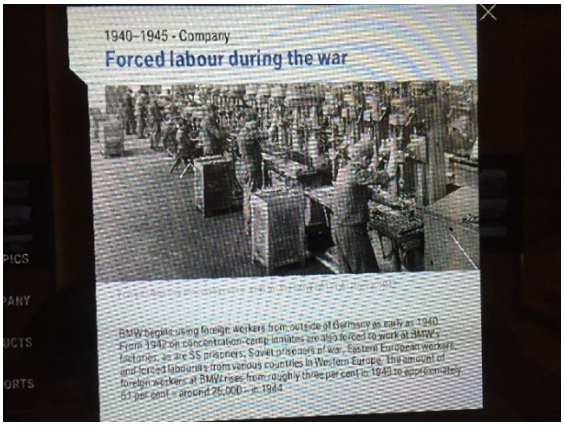
Inside BMW museum, view into room Visionen.

Figure 27

The touch screen in the section 1933 contains an assemblage of slides which provide brief information on the shortage of skilled labourers in the 1930s; the expansion of the company (it is emphasized that company focused on the production of aircraft engines in response to demands from the aviation ministry); the use of foreign workers, forced labourers, and the use of concentration camp inmates [663] One slide refers to "repressed memories," after the Second World War, while the last slide in this segment carries the title "New beginnings on two wheels: the BMW R 24" which highlights the begin of motorcycle production after 1945.[664]





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662 My own photograph, Munich, October 9, 2018.

663 The information text on the slides which address the issue of forced labour is provided respectively as follows: "The company opens other plants in addition to its original factories in Munich and Eisenach, and from 1940 onwards BMW uses an increasing number of foreign workers and forced labourers in its production operations. These workers are joined by concentration camp prisoners beginning in 1942;" "Forced labour during the war," shows a photograph of male workers and machinery in a production hall, and the text reads: "BMW begins using foreign workers from outside Germany as early as 1940. From 1942 on concentration camp inmates are also forced to work at BMW's factories, as are SS prisoners, Soviet prisoners of war, Eastern European workers, and forced labourers from various countries in Western Europe. The amount of foreign workers at BMW rises from roughly three per cent in 1940 to approximately 51 per cent – around 25,000 – in 1944."

664 "Repressed memories" pictures the destroyed BMW plant in Milbertshofen and states: "[a]t the end of the Second World War, a majority of the surviving foreign workers and forced labourers leave a destroyed Germany to return home. These survivors take with them virtually all memory of the horrors they endured and the atrocities committed against them. Like *most of the other companies* involved, BMW will suppress the thought of its own responsibility and guilt for many years."

665

Inside BMW museum, touch screen monitors in room *Visionen* with a focus on the Nazi era.

Figure 28

The second presentation of the topic appears among the seven sections, or 'houses,' of the exhibition, in the section of "*Haus des Unternehmens*" [House of the company] under the header "*ASPEKTE. Unternehmen. Aspekte. Denken und Handeln*" [Aspects. Company. Aspects. Thinking and acting.] This exhibit is also situated in a dedicated room, which requires the visitor to step off the visitor path, to view the features in this space. This space contains eight media tables with large format books. Above the books are cameras, which recognize the page opened by the visitor; corresponding, the visitor will hear a specific text. Similarly to the room "VISIONEN", the media tables are organized chronologically.

666

Inside BMW museum, room *Haus des Unternehmens*, tables holding thematic catalogues with related wall panels.

Figure 29

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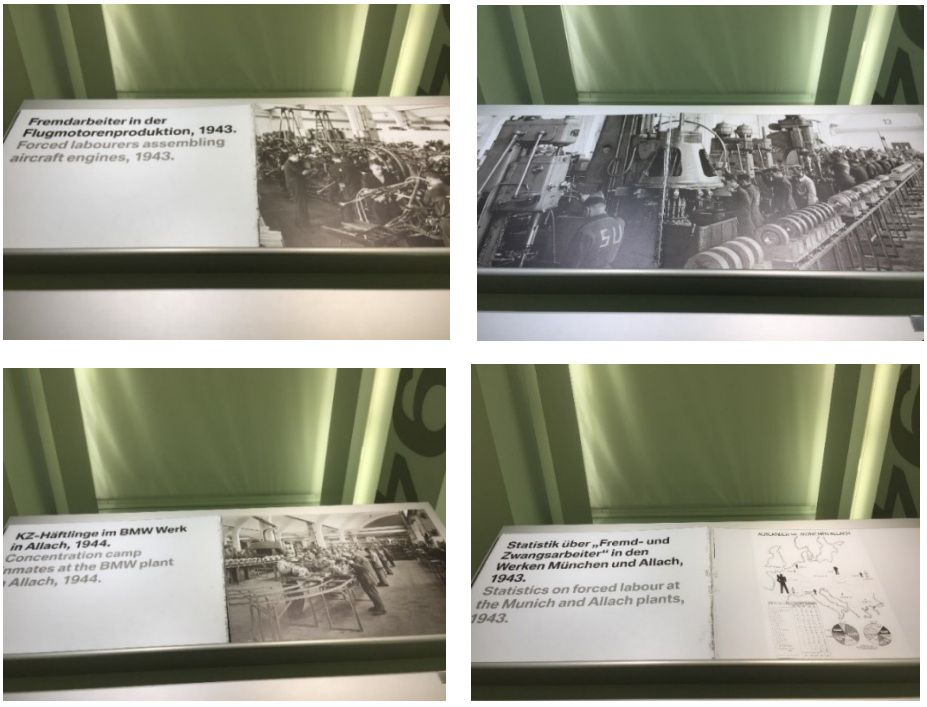
[665] My own photographs, Munich, October 9, 2018.
[666] Left image: my own photograph, Munich, October 9, 2018; right image: "BMW Museum," *Silva Innenarchitekten*, http://www.silva-innenarchitekten.de/22.0.html Accessed May 3, 2020.

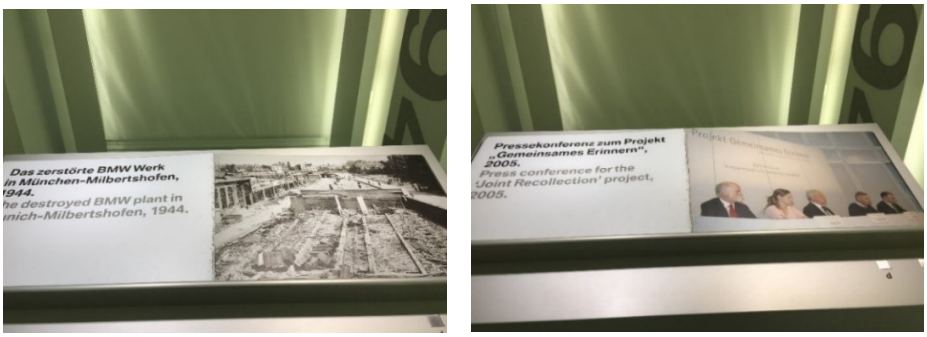
The first table is situated next to a wall panel which indicates the date 1940, and the adjoining wall-mounted text panel has the header "*Zwangsarbeit*" [forced labour.] The information provided in this space is two-fold: the text panel states

> "As a manufacturer of aircraft engines, BMW was an important element in the German armaments industry as the National Socialists pursued the political course that led to the Second World War. From 1940 onwards, the company began to employ forced laborers and, as of 1942, incorporated concentration camp prisoners into its workforce. Today the company has initiated research projects to clarify the forced labour situation at BMW, the darkest chapter of its history."

The large catalogue which is placed on a table contains archival photographs with explanatory text blocks. The information provided in this book relates to the use of forced and foreign labourers as well as concentration camp inmates, as well as to the destruction of the BMW plant. An infographic illustrates the number of foreign workers from diverse countries across Europe. The pages feature a photograph of a conference panel with the adjoining text "Press conference for the 'Joint Recollection' project, 2005."

Figure 30





667

Inside BMW museum, room *Haus des Unternehmens*, wall panel and excerpts from catalogue on forced labour.

Figure 31

Notably, between the two locations, a total of 5 archival photographs are used to depict forced laborers at the BMW plant; the workers in the pictures are seemingly well-nourished, groomed and clothed as they work on machinery inside a production hall or shop, thereby giving the impression that these men do not labour under duress and that they are reasonably well housed and fed. I will revisit this specific aspect in more detail below.

Second, in both sections, no clear differentiation is made between 'foreign' or 'forced labourers' and 'concentration camp inmates,' thereby blurring the significant differences in the experiences of these groups. On the same note, while concentration camp inmates are mentioned alongside foreign and forced labourers, more emphasis is placed on 'foreign' labourers in that statistical information is provided, such as the increases in numbers over time as well as the country of origin. Jewish workers, on the other hand, are not mentioned, although, based on the Nazi racial policy, they formed a specific category – specifically, as they were the only group which were selected for 'extermination through labour.'

Third, the language used in the context of the relationship between forced labourers and the company in both the slides as well as the book is ambiguous, if not potentially misleading; for example, the terms "employed" and "incorporated" are used to describe the company's exploitation of labourers, while the term "forced" is only used once: the term "employed" suggests a voluntary relationship between the employer and the employee, which is at odds with the concept of forced labour.

Fourth, the contextual information that surrounds the elements of forced labour in both sections focuses on the general shortage of skilled labour as well as the expansion of the company in response to the production demands made by the Ministry of Aviation, which, in turn, necessitated the greater need for workers; similarly, textual and visual representation of the company's particular challenges pre- and post-war (for example, the shortage of skilled labourers or the destruction and – temporary – requisition of plants by the Allies) is provided in the same spatial context as forced labour. This framing of the corporation's use of forced labour by highlighting the external pressures of the company suggests that the company was victimized and had no other choice but to resort to use forced labour. Furthermore, by addressing the company's losses in the same context as the experiences of forced labourers, perhaps unintended equal status is given to both situations, which in turn also reinforces the idea of the corporation as a victim. On

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667 All images: my own photographs, Munich, October 9, 2018.

the same note, by referring to external forces, such as the "National Socialist re-armament policy," the "German Ministry of Aviation," and "large government orders," which drove the increased production at BMW, the true responsibility for the use of forced labourers is obscured. The perpetrators seem remote, while the company appears to have no agency; thereby, the self-interest of the company is ignored and a dichotomy is established with the victimized corporation on the one hand, and a hazy group of pathologically evil perpetrators on the other.[668] In contrast, we know from Herbert's research on the use of forced labourers by corporations, "the initiative for the use of forced workers of all categories always derived from the firm […] Presumptions that the firms had been forced by the regime into using forced workers are groundless."[669] Furthermore, "individual firms were granted considerable discretion and leeway for action. The poor working conditions of workers […] can therefore not be explained solely on the basis of binding regulations set down by the authorities."[670]

Fifth, the text suggests that the memory of forced labour disappeared together with the workers, which returned to their home countries, while at the same time, BMW, among many other German companies, suppressed their responsibility. This representation of the apparent 'amnesia' during the postwar decades normalizes the specific way the corporation chose to deal with this aspect of its past. Furthermore, the reference to "all memory of the horrors they endured" is at odds with the overall representation of foreign and forced labour in the museum, which does not provide any visual or textual references to 'horrors.' In my interpretation, this particular choice of words hints at the horrible reality of slave labour yet without providing any specific information; it further suggests an expectation by the curator that the visitor has considerable pre-existing understanding of the topic of forced labour in order to understand the implied meaning.

Finally, the book in the room "ASPEKTE" mentions "initiated research projects," yet, no further information is provided; on the same note, the research projects are intended to "clarify the forced labour situation," rather than to rectify, address or make publicly accessible. Interestingly, the company does not address the compensation payments through the foundation initiative of German industry to former forced labourers.

The representation of this difficult heritage in the context of the corporate museum illustrates Vinitzky-Seroussi's and Teeger's concept of two types of silence: overt silence and covert silence. On the one hand, some aspects of the past have remained unexplored in the representation, while the pictures and texts hint at specific issues without further in-depth or contextual information.[671]

What is absent in both sections are references to the specific camp (Allach) as well as its particular sub-sections, which was purposefully constructed nearby the plant to house the workforce and expanded over time; any references to Jewish less-than-slaves labourers, which were brought in specifically to construct a bunker to take the production of aircraft engines underground; the brutality and deplorable living conditions under which these labourers suffered; the many deaths as a result of deliberate murder, brutal beatings, exhaustion, malnourishment and diseases; the long resistance of the corporation to give researchers access to their archives, the company's slow acknowledgement of it's past, and how exactly the company commemorates

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[668] Klenk, *Gedenkstaettenpaedagogik an den Orten nationalsozialistischen Unrechts*.
[669] *Ibid*., 206.
[670] *Ibid*., 198.
[671] Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger, "Unpacking the Unspoken," 1104; *Ibid*., 112.

this aspect of their history today.

The contextualization of the information which is provided on forced labourers at the BMW Allach plant suggests that the use of forced labour was one among many unfortunate events which occurred during the war, while both narratives close on a comforting conclusion: the slide show section declares a "new beginning" after 1945 with the production of a new motorcycle, while the book informs the interested viewer that today the company seeks to "clarify the forced labour situation," and hosted or participated in a conference. Not only does this contextualization frame the exploitation of forced labour as an unfortunate, but necessary event during the Second World War, but it also suggests that the company successfully overcame its (temporary) downfall economically as well as mnemonically.

The two sections in the BMW museum which represent this difficult must also be considered in their spatial arrangement within the museal space: it is notable, that both sections provide 'passive' information in that they require an active seeking-out from the visitor. In the first instance, the information on forced labour at BMW is not overtly offered through immediately visible photographs, text or objects, but rather 'hidden' in one of several touchscreens. Here, the visitor first needs to select the era – 1933 - in order to access information about the role of BMW during the Second World War, and then scroll through the slides of the touchscreen to find details about specific aspects of this time, including forced labour. The book in the second area in the museum requires visitors to stop and actively engage with the item.[672]


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Inside BMW museum, room *Haus des Unternehmens*, wall panel and table with catalogue on forced labour.

Figure 32

Mena's et al note that as a "specific collective memory is reconfigured, it can create several competing versions of a past even […] It can also make a past event seem irrelevant to present matters."[674] The representation of forced labour in the BMW museum is a manifestation of a specific version of the past, in which the corporation openly acknowledges the difficult heritage of exploitation of forced labour, while it does not address the even darker issue of Jewish slave labour. At the same time, as the specific format of the two areas which represent forced labour is comparatively rather small within a large visually and spatially entertaining and exciting exhibition

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[672] During my last visit to the BMW museum during the last week of November in 2018, I noticed that the book had been removed from the media table. Upon my inquiry, I was advised that the book was being repaired.
[673] My own photograph, Munich, November 27, 2018.
[674] Sébastien Mena, Jukka Rintamäki, Peter Fleming and André Spicer "On the Forgetting of Corporate Irresponsibility," *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 41, Iss. 4 (2015): 720-738, 724.

space, their significance is lost due to their spatial arrangement and visual invisibility. Additionally, due to the visual representation of forced labour which only represents able-bodied workers performing skilled labour inside production halls, the brutal and relentless exploitation and murder of Jewish slave labourers is thereby effectively undermined, erased and forgotten in public memory. Mena et al argue that the 'forgetting' occurs through the articulation of narratives, which "give meaning to the past event so that some aspects are attended to while others are obscured and disregarded."[675] The purpose is to control the narrative as well as the collective memory, "so that the negative association between the firm and the event will be diminished."[676] Through the specific contextualization and emphasis in BMW's museal narrative on forced labour, with its notable focus on 'more comfortable' aspects such as 'foreign' workers, the exploitation of Jewish slave labour is literally not included in the narrative, and thereby signified as irrelevant in respect to the past as well as the present.

6. Perpetrator photographs as a distinct category of difficult heritage

Scholars have problematized the use and display of perpetrator photographs for historical or educational purposes, albeit primarily in relation to photographs taken of victims in ghettos and camps.[677] The concept of 'perpetrator photography' is not a straightforward category, as perpetrator photography can include official or propaganda photographs as well as snapshots, and can range from representations of killings to public humiliation. Photographs depicting events of the Holocaust raise particularly challenging questions relating to 'historical truth,' the provenance, intended purpose and audience of the photograph.

The repeated use, reproduction and distribution of only a few specific photographs of the Holocaust makes them points of recognition.[678] Yet, it is precisely the iconographic status of a few select images which reduce the vast, diverse, and complex aspects of the Holocaust to a limited spectrum of sites and events.[679] While photographs of the Holocaust have contributed considerably to the public awareness and historical information[680] the "recirculated" images have "created a sense of familiarity with the Holocaust and with the National Socialist era that may prevent, rather than facilitate, engagement with the historical subject, particularly for students."[681] Yet, Susan Crane argues,

> "[w]ith photographs, what we see may be all we get, but that should not stop us from inquiring further, and as scholars we are in fact obligated to persist. Where the general public may accept the anonymity of the photographic subjects and lack of information about provenance, we [as scholars] should and can know better."[682]

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[675] *Ibid*., 727.
[676] Mena, Rintamäki, Fleming and Spicer, "On the Forgetting of Corporate Irresponsibility," 727.
[677] See for example: Susan Crane, "Choosing not to look: Representations, Repatriation, and Holocaust Atrocity Photography," *History & Theory* Vol. 47 (Oct. 2008): 309-330, 309; Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence*, (I.B. Tauris, 2004), 216; Sontag, *On Photography*, 20; Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory*; Cornelia Brink, "Vor aller Augen: Fotografien-wider-Willen in der Geschichtsschreibung," *WerkstattGeschichte*, Vol. 47 (2008): 61–74, 61. Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget*; Zelizer, *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*; Crane, "Choosing not to look."
[678] Isabel Wollaston, "The absent, the partial and the iconic in archival photographs of the Holocaust," *Jewish Culture and History* Vol. 12, Iss. 3 (2010): 439-462
[679] *Ibid*.; Keilbach, "Photographs, Symbolic Images, and the Holocaust; Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget*.
[680] Crane, "Choosing not to look: Representations, Repatriation, and Holocaust Atrocity Photography," 92; Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget;* ---., *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*.
[681] Crane, "Choosing not to look," 309.
[682] *Ibid*., 311.

Scholars caution us to consider the pervasive quality of photographs as well as the circumstances under which they were created: due to the absence of human interference in the physical and chemical processes of picture-making, photography "gains its objectivity from its very production process" and provides it with an "indexical quality that reinforces its apparent ability to depict reality as it is."[683] Propaganda photographs were used as part of a sophisticated arsenal for a variety of purposes and were subject to censorship and official guidelines.[684]A particularly poignant example of the staging and censoring of propaganda photographs are the seemingly positive portrayals of Jewish life under Nazi rule, which were fabricated as part of planned deception, such as a film shot in Theresienstadt. In these images, the civilians look well-nourished and content, the environment appears to be pleasant, and nothing hints at the true circumstances under which the prisoners were forced to live and die.[685]

Through propaganda photographs, a narrative is selected and formalized which serves to not only to establish a rational for subjugation and oppression of specific populations, and furthermore to legitimize the atrocities.[686] Some scholars argue that photographs taken by the perpetrators are particularly problematic in that they embody the "Nazi gaze:" on the one hand, the act of photographing in the context of the camps is embedded in hierarchic power relations,[687] as the "dichotomy between the photographers and those photographed largely mirrors the unequal power balance between the SS and the deportees […] the act of taking pictures reproduces and augments this asymmetric relationship."[688] At the same time, by gazing at the pictures in today's context, the victimization of the subjects is perpetuated: the individuals in perpetrator photographs "had no choice but to be photographed. Now, they have no choice but to the viewed by posterity," thereby raising the complex issue of the objectives behind using atrocity photographs.[689]

While the photographs of forced labourers performing work at the Allach plant which are displayed in the BMW museum do not depict atrocities or scenes of violence, I conceptualize them nevertheless as perpetrator photographs as the pictures were taken for propaganda purposes by a photographer commissioned by the company and the workers depicted in those images were forced to participate in the production and staging of these images.

Similarly to other iconographic Holocaust photographs, only a handful of images are used to depict forced and foreign labour at the BMW plant in the BMW museum; some of the same images are also used in the Dachau memorial site, as well as on the BMW archive website, and have been repeatedly used in newspaper articles. These images show a few select scenes within the BMW armament production cycle: the setting is a tidy production hall in which men perform their work in a seemingly calm and orderly manner. The men all appear to be in good health and clean, their clothing is intact, their shoes are shiny and at least one of the workers appears to

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[683] Keilbach, Judith, "Photographs, Symbolic Images, and the Holocaust: On the (im)possibility of depicting historical truth," *History & Theory,* Theme Iss. 47 (May 2009): 54-76, 55 and 63.
[684] Sybil Milton, "The Camera as a Weapon: Documentary Photography and the Holocaust," *Museum of Tolerance*, Annual 1, Chapter 3, http://www.museumoftolerance.com/education/archives-and-reference-library/online-resources/simon-wiesenthal-center-annual-volume-1/annual-1-chapter-3.html Accessed April 20, 2020.
[685] Karel. Margy, "Theresienstadt'(1944–1945) The Nazi propaganda film depicting the concentration camp as paradise," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 12, Iss. 2 (1992): 145-162.
[686] Ulrike Kopperman, "Challenging the Perpetrators' Narrative: A Critical Reading of the Photo Album 'Resettlement of the of the Jews from Hungary,'" *Journal of Perpetrator Research*, Vol. 2, Iss. 2 (2019): 101-129, 103.
[687] *Ibid*.
[688] *Ibid*., 122.
[689] Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust*, 216.

wear glasses. The positioning of the camera angle - facing the men - suggests that their seeming indifference to the photographer is likely staged.

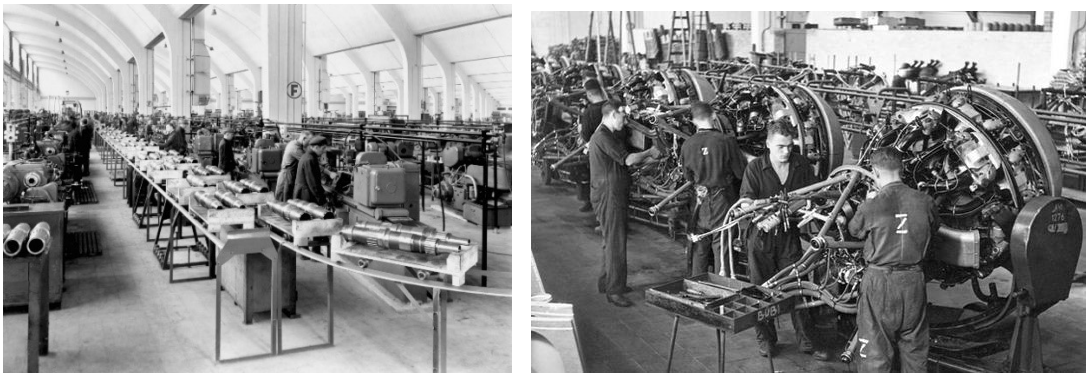
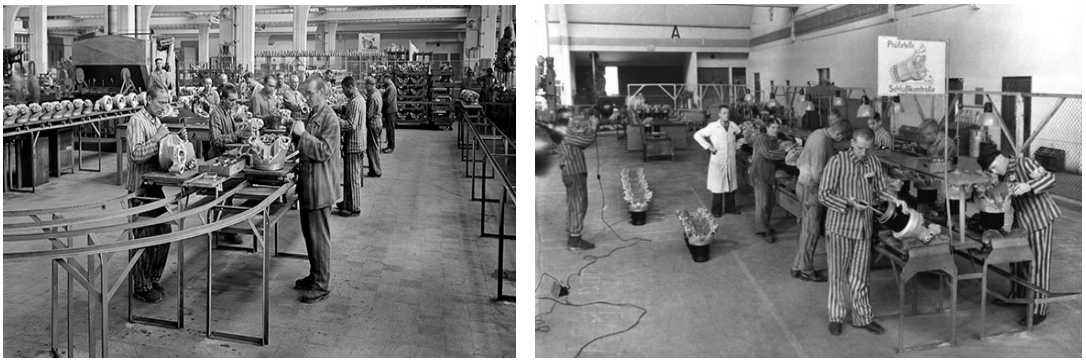


Figure 33



Propaganda photographs in BMW production plant, showing concentration camp prisoners and forced labourers at work.

Figure 34

One photograph only provides slightly more contextual information: a man wearing a white lab coat stands slightly set apart behind the workers, his hands on his hips, feet apart, he seems to observe sternly the performed labour. To the left of the man, another man is visible, wearing the striped concentration camp uniform. He appears to hold a camera or perhaps a light, with cables running across the floor. His face is blurred by another object closer to the photographer.

These photographs were produced by the corporation BMW and was likely intended to demonstrate proof of the company's performance to higher functionaries. Through the selective staging of the images a narrative is developed around the use of forced labourers and concentration camp prisoners, which not only demonstrates an orderly system of production but also legitimizes the use of prisoners for forced labour. The seemingly good health of the workers and the clean, orderly work environment appear to emphasize that forced labourers and prisoners were treated well and did not experience any duress. The position of the camera is directed at the workers, thereby representing the visual perception of the SS and the guards. The perception of the workers remains unknown, thereby creating, as Crane notes, a "glaring void of a reciprocal

690 "Concentration camp prisoners in Allach 1944," *BMW Group Archiv*, https://bmw-grouparchiv.de/research/media/5178b59a-d760-4e33-bf69-6f3027c9f7ba/web?pfdrid_c=false&uid=9e0c03d6-1b3e-496e-b720-e052d72fd941 Accessed October 14, 2019.

depiction within the photographic documentation of the Holocaust."[691] The photographs do not only perpetuate the gaze of the photographer who sought to capture images which would represent the company and its production in a favorable light; they also reflect the inherent power hierarchies in that the workers were used in the staging and production of these propaganda images. We cannot possibly estimate if, how and to what extent the workers were coerced into the production of these images. Nothing in these photographs reveals the deplorable living situations, the terror inflicted onto the inmates by guards, or the brutality with which they were treated.

The photographs on display in the BMW museum do not inform the viewer that they are perpetrator propaganda photographs; unfortunately, no information on the photographer, the exact date, location in the BMW plant or circumstances of the photographs seems to have been preserved as it is not available in the BMW archive.

Precisely because they are staged images produced by perpetrators, they contain a message, and this message may potentially, albeit unintended, still transpire, in that they provide an overly positive and one-side image of forced labour. In addition, the museal context in which these images are shown provides an aura of legitimacy and authenticity, thereby giving the viewer the impression that these photographs are indeed accurate representations of the experiences of forced labourers. Without any clarifying texts or images which present the significantly darker side of forced labour, visitors are not provided with any tools which would allow them to put the photographs into context.

In an interview with Mr. Manfred Grunert and Mr. Stefan Behr, as well as in a letter to the BMW Group board of directors, I had the opportunity to address my observations regarding the textual, visual and spatial representation of forced labour in the museum. Mr. Grunert disagreed with my conclusion that the information currently provided in the museum is potentially misleading and may trivialize the experiences of slave labour: "it is very important to me, personally, that we do not trivialize the topic of foreign and forced labour in our communications. I do not see that at all" and further "[b]ut that we don't speak about it, or if so, then in a trivializing manner, I don't see that."[692][my translation] With respect to the same point, Stefan Behr explained:

> "In the end, the BMW museum is one element of our communication, it shows the history with a view toward the future, it is a conception which is quite common for corporate museums, and we have the topic clearly anchored, and also, it can be found in different places, even if someone doesn't want to look at specific areas"

and further "[r]egarding the depth of detail…you can always argue."[693] Mr. Grunert conceded that the information is spatially distributed in the museum, but refers to other Munich institutions, such as the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism or the memorial site Dachau, where the topic is very prominently established. At the same time, Mr. Grunert explained that the BMW Group does not claim any *Deutungshoheit* for the history of the company. By referring to specific historical institutions, such as the memorial site Dachau or the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism as the main carriers of the memory for the Third Reich, the corporation BMW does not only pass on the responsibility for

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[691] Crane, "Choosing not to look," 318.
[692] Interview Dr. Manfred Grunert and Mr. Stefan Behr, BMW Archive, Munich, November 21, 2018.
[693] *Ibid*.

the 'correct' representation of forced labour, but also reinforces the notion that the 'ownership' of this aspect of German's history lies with designated memory institutions.

Returning to the questions which guided me through my exploration of the representation of forced labour at the BMW museum, I sought to examine the intersection of difficult heritage and corporate interests in the context of the company's museum of one of the most successful car producers in the world. The correlating evolution of corporate museums, a global Holocaust memory, and the international praise and respect for Germany's nationalization of Holocaust education and commemoration have created a particular climate for German companies who been involved in the human rights violations of the Third Reich. By the 21st century, German corporations have – for the most part - gradually (and at times grudgingly) accepted the public examination of their role during the Nazi era. This acceptance has taken the ritualized form of public acknowledgements, historical investigations of the companies' past and subsequent publications, at times public displays, such as in corporate museums or in the form of public memorials or informational boards: for example, in 2019, commemorative and informative boards were installed at the site of the former subcamp of the *Siemens-Schuckertwerk* in Nuremberg.[694] This gradual evolution of public acknowledgement as well as the ritualized aspect of German corporate memory with respect to the Holocaust are not dissimilar to the development of the institutionalized commemoration of the Holocaust which began to emerge in Germany during the 1990s. Yet, is the representation of a difficult past appropriate in all settings and contexts, and what are the potential risks and consequences if the suffering of the victims is narrated in the space and by the descendants-by-proxy of the perpetrator for their own purposes? Here, I return to Rothberg's concept of "persons with a Nazi background."[695] Rothberg's suggests that we must ask broader questions relating to historical guilt, responsibility and material continuities of National Socialism – German corporations, for example, inherited capital and thereby continue to profit indirectly from the exploitation of forced labourers today, decades after the end of the Second World War.

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[694] *Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitaggelaende*, "*Uebergabe der Gedenk- und Informationstafeln zum ehemaligen KZ-Aussenlager Nuernberg Sued*," *Museen der Stadt Nuernberg*, https://museen.nuernberg.de/dokuzentrum/aktuelles/uebergabe-gedenktafeln/ Accessed May 1, 2020.
[695] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*.

CHAPTER 7. Re-telling of a contentious past in the new exhibition *Ein Ort der Erinnerung*[696] at the BMW corporate museum in Munich

> "[T]he production of historical narratives involves the uneven contribution of competing groups and individuals who have unequal access to the means of such production. The forces […] are less visible than gunfire, class property, or political crusades. I want to argue that they are no less powerful."[697] (Preface, Trouillot, 1995)
>
> "We just wanted to deal with the subject in silence, and I think the word 'silence' is very, very good for us – just don't get too loud!"[698] [Mr. Andreas Braun, curator, BMW museum, 2020; my translation]

Pointing to its transformative potential, Esther Solomon argues that "difficult heritage can be approached as a tool for enhancing historical thinking and critical history education,"[699] and that museums can be powerful educational tools for the "development of historical thinking" as they function "as loci of meaning construction [specifically with respect to the] often biased nature of historical discourses."[700] Taking the concept of difficult heritage in the context of museums spaces as the theoretical framework for my analysis, I will explore how the difficult heritage of the exploitation of forced labourers by German corporations during the Third Reich is (re)framed and represented in the recently added new special exhibition *Ein Ort der Erinnerung* at the BMW museum in Munich. In my previous chapter on the representation of forced labour during the Nazi era in the same museal space, I examined how this dark topic was addressed in the incongruent context of a corporate space of a luxury vehicle manufacturer: the broader questions

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[696] Translated: A place of remembrance.
[697] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past,* xix.
[698] Jungblut, "Stille tut uns gut."
[699] Esther Solomon, "Museums, education and 'difficult' heritage. An introduction." *MUSEUMEDU* Vol. 6 (2018), https://www.academia.edu/40294526/Museums_education_and_difficult_heritage_An_introduction_MUSEUMEDU_JOURNAL_no_6?email_work_card=title Accessed Nov. 15, 2020.
[700] Ivana Brstilo and Zeljka Jelavić "Culture as afield of possibilities: Museum as a means of social integration," *Etnološka Istraživanja* [Ethnological Research], Vol. 15 (2010): 161-173.

I sought to explore in that chapter revolved around how the representation of this difficult past would take shape in the corporate meta-narrative of technological success and progress; and how capitalism and corporate philosophy intersect with difficult heritage in this specific context.

With the opening of the new exhibition, I have the unexpected opportunity to examine the evolution of the discourse of addressing a difficult heritage in a corporate space over the course of roughly a decade. In the previous chapter, I examined a representation which, in 2018, was already outdated, specifically in light of the newly emerging information about forced labour in general terms, and the Allach subcamp complex more specifically. The specific format that the representation of forced labour took in the permanent exhibition of the BMW museum was a reflection of the company's position on the topic at a specific point in time as well as an indication of the wider socio-cultural changes within Germany's public memory relating to the exploitation of forced labourers by German corporations. The newly developed special exhibition *Ein Ort der Erinnerung* can thus be understood to be representative of changes in the company's perception of this difficult heritage over the past decade, its significance in the company's historical narrative, and the increasing visibility of this specific local history as a result of the archaeological excavations. At the same time, as Kratz points out,

> "[m]useum exhibitions are commonly seen as critical sites for the constitution of identity and difference. They provide occasions and resources for representing and reflecting on notions of quality, worth, and other social values and meanings."[701]

How, then, "are values and identities shaped and produced through exhibitions? How are exhibitions put together in ways that might communicate particular values […]?"[702]

In this chapter, I will examine the content of the new exhibition in the BMW museum in relation to the previous representation of the topic forced labour in the same museal space. I will situate the new exhibition in the broader changes in museology which occurred over the course of the past decades, and more specifically relating to the relationship between German corporations and their difficult heritage of forced labour. The key questions I seek to answer in this discussion are: in which aspects has the representation of this topic changed overall with respect to visibility; display of images, documents etc.; interpretive texts, and content? What do potential changes indicate about the significance of this topic in the context of the company's self-perception? Can potential changes between the previous and current representation indicate which aspects of difficult heritage are no longer considered difficult, or, conversely, which aspects continue to be difficult? Returning to Solomon's argument, I seek to examine whether and to what extent the potential of the difficult heritage of forced labour to enhance historical thinking and critical history education within the space of the BMW corporate museum is fulfilled, which raises important questions: if this critical potential remains unexplored, and the representation of this difficult heritage is limited to the provision of 'comfortable' historical facts, what are the potential consequences and what conclusions may we draw? While the representation of genocide, persecution and violence in museums and memorial sites have become a global trend, often combining aspects of education and commemoration, is the

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[701] Kratz, "Rhetorics of Value," 21.
[702] *Ibid*.

representation of difficult heritage in a corporate museum simply part of this broader shift, or does the corporate context raise specific concerns?[703] On the other hand,

The reframing of the topic of forced labour in the new exhibition in the BMW museum occurs at a point in time when museums as cultural institutions have undergone considerable changes, which need to be taken into account; from approximately the 1980s,

> "social and political developments and questions raised then exposed the lacunae in unspoken assumptions about how museums worked and whom they were for. The challenged museums to reach new audiences, address communities once ignored, reconnect with absent source communities, transform representations in exhibitions, and change relations of power and authority that had long been in place."[704] As part of these changing environments, and newly emerging academic work on "the politics of representations, which are part of the cultural world that surrounds us and through which we interpret our environment, were in fact neither natural nor innocent."[705]

Calls to decolonize the museum, critique voiced by marginalized and Indigenous communities, scholars and activists, created a widespread shift, which led museums to seek and accommodate greater interactions and collaborations with concerned communities, and exploring possibilities of pluralizing answers. Historians Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski note that the critical mission of museums "must take into account the changes going in the present world, such as democratization, the cosmopolitization of culture, European integration and its limitations, the interaction of local and global factors, and the problems of social minorities, migrations, and social inequalities," and "should have an active role, encouraging the public to understand the complexity of the present world."[706]

The new exhibition in the BMW museum is situated and contextualized in these broader socio-cultural and political shifts, which also include the development of a global Holocaust memory and Germany's national commemorative and educational discourses relating to the Holocaust. Specific strategies implemented in this new exhibition, thus, have to be understood in parts to be in relation to these wider trends.

1. Meaning-making through spatial and ideological frames

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[703] See, for example: Arnold-de-Simine, *Mediating Memory in the Museum;* Gerd Bayer and Oleksandr Kobrynskyy. *Holocaust Cinema in the Twenty-First Century: Images, Memory and the Ethics of Representation* (Wallflower Press, 2015); Jennifer Carter, "The Museology of Human Rights," in *The Idea of a Human Rights Museum*, ed. Karen Busby, Adam Muller, and Andrew Woolford (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015); Dessingue and Winter, *Beyond Memory;* Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture;* John Lennon and Malcolm Foley, *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* (Cengage Learning, 2000); Levy and Sznaider, *Memory Unbound*; Andrea Liss, *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography and the Holocaust* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1998); Logan and Reeves, *Places of Pain and Shame;* Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage,* 190; Brigitte Sion (ed) *Death Tourism: Disaster Sites as Recreational Landscape* (Seagull Books, 2014); Williams, *Memorial Museums.*

[704] Ivan Karp and Corinne A. Kratz, "The Interrogative Museum," in *Museum as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges* ed. Raymond Silverman (Routledge, London, 2014), 279-288, 282.

[705] *Ibid*.

[706] Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski, "Introduction," in *From Museum Critique to the Critical Museum* ed. Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski (Routledge, London, 2015), 1-12, 1-2.


[707]

Inside BMW museum, entrance area to new special exhibit

Figure 35

As a spatially and thematically separate exhibition situated within the permanent exhibition in the BMW museum, the new representation of forced labour required an effective framework to communicate to the visitors its emotional and moral gravity. Considering the dedication of the museum to the celebration and evolution of the brand, such a separation needed to be clearly communicated, both visually and in content. The inherently incongruous setting of this difficult heritage in the corporate space of a luxury vehicle manufacturer is addressed through the specific spatial framing of the exhibition: by setting this exhibit apart from the rest of the permanent display, allows the company as well as its museum visitors to smoothly transition from the narrative and visual path of modernity, technological progress and leisure experiences to a dark and gruesome historical chapter, only to physically and mentally rejoin the broader narrative (and the return to the present). The paradoxical setting of the dazzling museum and the company's difficult heritage raises specific challenges; specifically with respect to the potential reaction of visitors and the reputation of the brand. It is thus of specific interest in my analysis to examine closely how this difficult heritage is framed (rhetorically and visibly) in order to coherently communicate with the rest of the museum and its intended messages relating to the brand. Kratz points to the aspect of "value" as a way to evaluate and valorize.[708] While Kratz discusses specifically objects which are placed into a museum collection, thereby potentially enhancing its value, I suggest that similar notions may apply in the incorporation of a specific topic into a museal space, which may at first glance be at odds with the museum's intended message and mission. In the case of the BMW museum, for example, I suggest that the incorporation of the topic of forced labour can be understood as a move to add *positive* value to the brand. Kratz notes that "[r]hetorics of value are powerful both because they are felt in many ways (and may seem 'natural') and because they encapsulate the authority of their institutional embedding. They are not simply about words, images, or themed experience, then, but are both part of and about political economies of representation too."[709]

Here, I suggest, that the representation of the Holocaust has become so 'natural' in the German context, that the display of information relating to the historical events in itself is a normal

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[707] Photographs provided by Dr. Andreas Braun, BMW Group, in email, November 11, 2020.
[708] Corinne A. Kratz, "Rhetoric of Value: Constituting Worth and Meaning Through Cultural Display," *Visual Anthropology Review*, Vol. 27, Iss. 1 (2011): 21-48, 22.
[709] *Ibid*., 25.

experience. Furthermore, by building on the extensive commemoration of and education on the Holocaust in Germany, the corporation demonstrates not only that it aligns itself with Germany's national *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung*, but that in fact it demonstrates its integrity as a company by openly addressing its difficult heritage.

The entrance to the new exhibition space *Ein Ort der Erinnerung* is set apart from the rest of the exhibition space through strategically placed white panels, which effectively create an entrance way into a bright airy room. The tone of the lighting has an almost clinical and austere atmosphere to it, which may serve to underscore the sincerity and degree of openness with which the company addresses this topic. The entrance is framed spatially and thematically by two dominating pieces of information that stand out in their size and positioning. To the left of the entrance space the text on a large white panel informs the visitor:

> "The *Bayrische Motorenwerke* 1933 – 1945 - The BMW Group acknowledges its history and is confronting it with a critical eye. The company's aim with this exhibition, which tells the story of forced labour during the NS dictatorship, is to help ensure that nothing like this ever happens again."[710]

A floor-to-ceiling panel to the right, set slightly back from the first panel, thereby creating an opening into the exhibition, notes: "Human Dignity is Sacrosanct. Article 1 of the Basic Constitutional. Law. The Basic Constitutional Law of the Federate Republic of Germany of 23 May 1949 is Germany's constitution."[711] In an interview with the *Bayerische Rundfunk*, Mr. Braun stated that the display and placement of the Article 1 is the key to understanding this exhibition.

> "We have here, exclusively on the basis of providing information, nothing more and nothing less, noted what the corporation BMW has done since the Nazi era. Here, you don't see great confession or something similar, I think the room does this as a whole. All visitors who come here, maybe the second or third generation of those who suffered here terribly: here you can get more information."[712] [my translation]

In an email, Mr. Braun emphasized specifically that "the BMW Group is extremely committed to this article [Article 1]."[713] [my translation]. The company, thus, clearly communicates its values and thereby signals its contemporary identity and philosophy as markedly different and perhaps reformed from the identity of the company who exploited forced labourers. At the same, this constellation of the company's statement vis-à-vis a post-war article of the German constitution which specifically refers to the dignity of each person (which was, of course, fundamentally disregarded and violated in Nazi Germany), suggests that a thorough legal and social reckoning with the past has taken place in the country of the perpetrators as well as within the company. Its deliberate placement may also seek to communicate that the company acknowledges the indisputable significance of this statement, and that the exhibition itself can be considered as a tangible step toward restoring the violated human dignity of the victims.

As a concluding remark to the content of the exhibition, as well as an effective echo of the entrance, the exhibition closes with a wall panel "Facing up to and coming to terms with the

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[710] Information from photographs provided by Dr. Andreas Braun Photographs in email, November 11th, 2020.
[711] *Ibid*.
[712] *Ibid*.
[713] Email Dr. Andreas Braun, BMW Group, Nov. 24, 2020.

past:" beginning with the 1980s publication by Horst Moennich[714] to "projects promoting tolerance in society," to highlighting the establishment of the foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future," which offered compensation payments for former forced labourers, to a scientific dissertation which examined BMWs history during the Nazi era, noting that the results "were widely communicated." A photograph shows a panel during which Constanze Werner's dissertation[715] was presented in 2005. The panel also lists publications by Till Lorenzen as well as by Andreas Heusler, Mark Spoerer and Helmuth Trischler.[716] A QR code, which takes interested visitors to the company's website with further details on its history, offers additional information, documents and pictures.

This approach of public acknowledgement, historical information and 'lessons learned' is not dissimilar to Germany's national approach to the memory of the Holocaust. By drawing from this approach, the corporation mirrors the transformation of a difficult heritage into a positive national asset, thereby effectively communicating its contemporary values while at the same time generating creating a link to Germany's *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* on a national, political and social level. This framing allows the company to identify and separate this historical chapter as different from its overarching historical narrative; the wrong-doings occurred in the context of a particular historical socio-political constellation and represent the company in the past. Yet, in spite of the political and economic challenges of this time, the company continued to thrive and presents itself today as markedly different from its past identity. The public engagement with this difficult history in itself thus effectively underscores this separation between the company's different identities; at the same time, it enables visitors and customers to reconcile the dark past with the brand in the present. Indeed, the exhibition and the engagement of the company with its difficult heritage communicate *positive* values: Herr Huber, the museum's director, speaks specifically to the importance of communicating the corporation's values to visitors through its new exhibition:

> "The people who come here, specifically internationally, and want to see beautiful cars. Many will be surprised, how much history we show here as well. We show much of what moves us, also our values."[717] [my translation]

The values of the BMW Group are specifically noted on the panel "Shaping the Future," incorporating a number of phrases which have become key words for any multinational corporation: "relationships and dialogue," "a culture of tolerance and equal opportunities," "different cultures […] religious convictions […] world views," "sustainable mobility," "tolerance, openness and diversity," and "social projects that champion multicultural coexistence worldwide," and finally listing five core values of the corporation: responsibility, appreciation, transparency, trust and openness.

These key values are the antithesis of the values of the Nazi era; the deliberate listing of these values in the context of this exhibition, alongside the introductory statement by the company at the exhibition's entrance, suggests a uncompromised dedication and initiative: the BMW Group "acknowledges" and "confronts", it "tells a story" and "helps to ensure," thereby signaling that the corporation takes a (pro)active role in addressing past injustices, and communicating

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[714] Moennich, *The BMW Story.*
[715] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit bei BMW.*
[716] Andreas Heusler, Mark Spoerer, and Helmuth Trischler (eds) *Ruestung, Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit im "Dritten Reich, (*De Gruyter, 2010); Till Lorenzen, *BMW als Flugmotorenhersteller 1926-1940*, (De Gruyter 2008).
[717] Information from photographs provided by Dr. Andreas Braun Photographs in email, November 11th, 2020.

that the former perpetrator aligns with the survivors ("tells a story") and has, in fact, become an ally: through this statement, the company also connects itself with broader national and international discourses of Holocaust memory, and the global call for "never again." The historically accurate largely negative and exclusively reactive responses of the company to address its dark past are, of course, effectively overwritten.

2. Photographs of former forced labourers as objects or subjects?

As the visitor enters the exhibition, their first impression is that of a brightly illuminated – almost gleaming – space, further enhanced through segments of glossy white and grey flooring, an open ceiling with slender grey metal beams on which lights and further floating banners are mounted. Large-size portrait photographs (presumably of former forced labourers, although it is not explicitly stated) printed onto semi-translucent white banners, hang from the ceilings, and thereby disrupt and dominate the space. These 18 portraits are part of 60 photographs which originate from old BMW work ID cards. No further information is provided with these photographs; instead, the design is intended to create personal encounters between visitors and victims: "by making eye-to-eye contact with the visitor, [the photographs] encounters them as anonymous but admonishing contemporary witnesses." [my translation] The slight blurriness of the black-and-white photographic images and the faintly visible shape of the images from the backside of the panels give these photos a somewhat eerie quality, as if they gaze into the present from a vastly remote time and space.

Along each side of the room, detailed information on specific topics is provided, organized chronologically and thematically: beginning with the "Transformation into an arms company," to the "War economy 1939 – 1945" the boards offer informational text, original contemporary posters, for example, to remind staff of safety measures, charts, sketches and plans of the plants, including Allach, Duerrerhof/Eisenach, Berlin-Spandau, and Basdorf/ Zuehlsdorf, various archival photographs, including a visit by Albert Speer, plant managers, and bombing damage.

On a monitor, which is installed on a pillar in the room, visitors can read a selection of quotes by survivors of former forced labourers; in addition, two video testimony by survivors provide further insight into their experiences. The intent of the representation of individual former forced labourers is to "provide the survivors with a voice."

The layout of the exhibition, the use of original documents and photographs, alongside with survivor testimony is a formular familiar from other Holocaust-related sites and museums, which are usually organized chronologically, focus on 'chapters' during which specific events took place, display original objects, texts and photographs, and oftentimes end with the liberation of the camps, or the emigration of survivors to other countries.

The strategic inclusion of historical texts and sounds into the exhibition (on a significantly larger scale than in the previous exhibition) – and specifically items which reflect the victims' perspective, such as a recorded testimony - relies on the auratic and 'authentic' quality of these items to further underpin its claim to 'truth-telling.' By focusing on the information provided in the documents and photographs the viewer is affirmed that the company is not hiding anything – after all, the photographs, texts and recordings are witnesses in their own right. The use of original artefacts is, of course, a long-established museal tradition; however, in the context of the Holocaust such artefacts assume a different significance as object witnesses as well as their symbolic representation of the dead victims: their auratic and 'authentic' quality creates a bridge between the visitor in the museum in the 'here and now' and the historical events 'there and then.' By incorporating original items such as photographs or letters into the

exhibition, a further connection is made to Holocaust museums and memorials, drawing from the well-established social and cultural capital of these institutions. Arguably, the most notable and compelling strategy – and in my interpretation a particularly problematic one - applied in the new exhibition is the use of portraits of individual former foreign and forced labourers and concentration camp inmates, both in terms of their content as well as their prominence in the room. Already from the entrance area into the room, visitors encounter the gaze of these individuals, whose large individual portrait photographs face the viewer from several floor-to-ceiling banners. The size and display of these images, alongside their placement in the midst of the exhibition space, draws the attention to the humanity of these individuals and their life stories.

This approach is markedly different from the previous exhibition strategy, which did not allude to individual workers, but instead only referred to broad and abstract categories, such as foreign or forced labourers and concentration camp inmates, thereby blurring and disregarding the considerable differences of experiences of different groups of workers – including their likelihood to survive. By humanizing the victims through individual photographs, the corporation has moved away from its previous approach, and invites visitors to imagine the victims as human beings, allowing us to take a deeper interest in the other person. The use of portrait photographs is a particularly powerful strategy, as, on a most fundamental level,

> "portraiture engages everyone. People respond to looking at portraits – they feel a connection. […] a portrait is something we're very comfortable with and a lot of us grew up with them in our family collections."[718]

The approach to use photographs of individual persons also mirrors and responds to the strategies which are frequently used by memorial sites and memorial museums, and are therefore also a familiar and recognizable format for visitors: through the focus on specific individuals, to an extent the deliberate dehumanization of the victims is reverted, and the viewer or visitor is invited to experience more personalized access to a historical event, thereby bridging them chasm to a spatially and temporally remote situation. Original archival documents, objects and images also serve to 'document' historical events, in that they give shape to specific individual experiences. By focusing on individuals and their stories – as opposed to collective experiences - an empathetic response is encouraged in the visitor.

Yet, this potentially rich approach falls short in BMW's new exhibition as it sends contradictory messages and at times leaves important aspects unexplored: while the exhibition seemingly places greater emphasis on the experiences of individual victims, the representation of only photography without further information on the person, their circumstances and so on, it is arguably difficult for the viewer to feel a personal connection to the person in the photograph; no additional information is provided on the portrait photographs on the banners – even though their prominent positioning invites visitors to engage with them. At the same time, the photographs are unrelated to the video or audio testimony, or the images and information presented on the walls.

Of particular concern is the continued use of uncontextualized perpetrator photography. The archival images in the exhibition (for example, photographs of the plants, workers, or

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[718] Cat Lachowskyj, "Portrait Photography in major art museums: Interview with Deborah Klochko," *Lensculture*, https://www.lensculture.com/articles/deborah-klochko-portrait-photography-in-major-art-museums Accessed November 28, 2020.

residential areas) were exclusively produced by the company; the large portrait photographs of former forced labourers are pictures taken for identification purposes for their work at the BMW plant. As no information is provided on the provenance of the images, and the problematic issue of perpetrator photography remains unexplored, and a potentially powerful pedagogical aspect in the exhibit remains unfulfilled. As I have illustrated in the previous chapter, the use of perpetrator photographs for historical or educational purposes – regardless of whether they depict atrocities – is highly problematic for a variety of reasons.

While the term 'perpetrator photography' may initially conjure images of mass shootings and public beatings, emaciated camp prisoners and mounds of corpses in liberated camps, there are other less graphically specific perpetrator photographs which may not directly depict scenes of atrocity, but provide staged scenes, for example, for propaganda purposes. While photographs taken at specific factories were often created by a commissioned company photographer, the portrait photographs of workers on the identification cards, however, were taken by the *Erkennungsdienst* [detection service], for example, for identification, categorization, and registration. These images are indeed unique sources, in that – as documents created by the perpetrators – they create a visual narrative how the camps functioned, and a seemingly ideal state, from the perspective of the SS.[719] These images are not a true reflection of the reality of the camps, but can be perceived to be a manifestation of the ideological and practical imagination of the perpetrators, thereby showing a world that "mostly hides the truth of what was happening."[720] Meissel emphasizes the importance of integrating survivor testimony, as

> "[t]he violence behind these pictures becomes visible only when integrating the perspective of survivors, who themselves were often very aware of the lack of proper documentation of crimes."[721]

In the new BMW exhibition *Ein Ort der Erinnerung* the same propaganda photographs which were used in the previous exhibit are used again in this new exhibition space. The repeated use of a few photographs of a heterogenous group of diverse categories of workers and prisoners with vastly different experiences and changes of survival reduces the complex aspect of forced labour to a limited range of representations. Precisely because the photographs show seemingly healthy, well-fed and clothed individuals working in a 'normal' work setting, performing 'normal' tasks, the reality of forced labour and the divergent treatment of specific groups of workers are obscured, if not minimized.

The portrait photographs of former workers – specifically as a result of their size and their placement – invite a more personal and intimate engagement with the fate of individual prisoners. The potential to provide a personal connection to the humanity, experience and perspective of the subject is, however, compromised, if not cancelled, by the very circumstances under which the photographs were generated: at the point in time, when the portrait photographs were taken, these individuals had already entered the categories which had been generated by the Nazis: foreign worker, Eastern labourer, Prisoner of War, concentration camp prisoner. The portrait

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[719] Lukas Meissel, "Der Taeterblick: SS-Bildproduktionen in Nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern," in Anton Holzer (ed) *Fotogeschichte: Beitraege zur Geschichte und Aesthetik der Fotografie*, *Heft 150* (2021) http://www.fotogeschichte.info/bisher-erschienen/hefte-ab-150/160/fotogeschichte-160-2021-meissel-taeterblick/ Accessed August 15, 2021.

[720] Lukas Meissel, Lecture: "Nazis used photography to conceal the truth of life in concentration camps during the Holocaust," *USC Shoah Foundation*, February 26, 2019, https://sfi.usc.edu/news/2019/02/24476-lecture-nazis-used-photography-conceal-truth-life-concentration-camps-during Accessed August 5, 2021.

[721] *Ibid*.

photographs are manifestations of fascism and oppression in that even decades after their production, the innate racial ideology which generated them in the first place remain unquestioned and uncritiqued. Shelley Butler refers to as the "power relations inherent in acts of collections and display."[722] Power structures of capitalism and colonialism, for example, informed and shaped (and continue to shape) exhibitions in history, ethnographic, and natural history museums through the choices which guided the collection of objects, artefacts, images, and stories; the selection of specific artefacts for display; the deliberate grouping and display of objects; pictures and photographs from the perspective of the colonizer; and in interpretive texts. Drawing from Clifford Geertz notion of 'culture as text,' Jane Cannizzo suggests that

> "[a] museum collection may be thought of as a kind of cultural text, one that may be read to understand the underlying cultural or ideological assumptions that have informed its creation, selection, and display. Within such a collection, objects act as an expression not only of the worldview of those who choose to make and use them, but also of those who chose to collect and exhibit them."[723]

Through the unquestioned use and display of these photographs, the inherent power imbalances and racial ideologies remain unquestioned and are perpetuated. Precisely because the photographs (the portraits as well as the images of workers in the BMW production halls) are staged, the narrative which was created in the first place for propaganda purposes, is perpetuated, and the inherent falsehoods legitimized. The very context of the production of these images – the categorization of the person based on racial categories and the integration of that person into the system of labour – continues to inform the photograph, thereby freezing the individual forever in their ascribed role and function but does not allude to the before or after. Through the unquestioned display of the images, their meaning is reanimated through reinterpretation and recirculation.

As the visitors' attention is not drawn to the problematic nature of these images, the unequal power balance between the photographer and the subject is perpetuated. As the forced labourers had no choice but to be photographed, they are now subjected to the gaze of the uninformed visitor who may take the photograph for face value. Yet, as Crane has so succinctly stated in relation to perpetrator photography: "[w]here the general public may accept the anonymity of the photographic subject and lack of information about provenance, we [as scholars] should and can know better."[724] The responsibility here lies with the museum professionals, who did not feel that it was necessary to provide additional information about these images.

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[722] Butler, *Reflexive Museology: Lost and Found*, 160.
[723] Cannizzo, Jeanne, "Exhibiting Cultures: 'Into the Heart of Africa,'" *Visual Anthropology Review* Vol. 7, Iss. 1 (1991): 150–160, 151.
[724] *Ibid*., 311.


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Inside BMW museum, inside new special exhibit

Figure 36

While the use of individual photographs of former forced and foreign labourers and concentration camp prisoners in the BMW museum indicates a vastly different approach to representations of the past by the corporation, without critical information and education about the providence of the photographs the use of these images holds the potential to perpetuate the dehumanization and victimization of these individuals.

3. The atrocity without victims?

While the previous representation of forced labour in the BMW museum mentioned the victims in generic terms – such as 'foreign' or 'forced' labourer – the most notable difference in the new display is the open acknowledgement of the different categories of workers and prisoners, and the vastly different treatment they received. For example, it is noted that Eastern workers were "treated particularly badly with regard to food and accommodation" and "often suffered severe punishments, including executions." And furthermore,

> "the living and working conditions [of the concentration camp prisoners in the All ach and the Eisenach plant] can only be described as inhumane. Constantly subjected to physical violence and the risk of being murdered – the principle of 'des - truction through work' was implemented here."

It is highlighted that the death rate of concentration camp prisoners was particularly high, and that "[t]housands of them died as a result of the detention and working conditions as well as inadequate nutrition and disastrous hygienic conditions." It is also noted that Jewish prisoners were used for the construction of the bunker in the Allach subcamp complex, and that "[t]he 'construction commando' was considered a punishment and death commando. The principle of 'destruction through work' was implemented to extreme effect." This segment shows a well-known propaganda photograph of concentration camp prisoners working in a shop under supervision. In addition, a photograph of the bunker construction site in the spring of 1944 as well as a photograph depicting concentration camp prisoners working – the text accompanying the photograph states:

> "Concentration camp prisoners excavating the foundations of the hall bunker at the BMW plant in Munich-Allach. The 'Bunker Construction Command" was under the

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[725] Photographs provided by Dr. Andreas Braun in email, November 11th, 2020.

technical supervision of 'Organisation Todt,' a Nazi organization for the structural protection of armament factories."

Under the header "Living conditions" it is noted that

> "[w]ith reference to the prominent position of the company as a key producer of the arms industry, the BMW leadership repeatedly attempted, at least to a limited extent, to avoid the excesses of the SS and Gestapo on BMW premises. For this reason, the cooperation between the BMW plant management and the SS guard detachments was often tense, as there were repeated conflicts regarding responsibility. From the Allach plant it is documented that there was a decline in production due to insufficient and inferior food supplies for the workers. BMW asked the camp management to improve food supplies. When this was refused, BMW increased the rations from its own stocks."

These various text segments are accompanied by archival materials, such as a bilingual brochure for the recruitment of French and Belgian workers, archival photographs of the plants, and several images of Italian workers in their residential quarters playing cards or with an interpreter. It should be noted that the multiple propaganda photographs used in the exhibition are not indicated as perpetrator images. A small note under an aerial photograph of the subcamp complex states that by the end of the war, over "14,500 prisoners, including over 1,000 women" were housed in the camp.

Returning to Vinitzky-Seroussi's and Teeger's concept of overt and covert silences, I define the representation of the Jewish victims in the context of the new exhibit as covert silence, as covert silences do not necessarily indicate a complete absence of information, but rather manifest "through issues that are hinted at but not explored."[726] In the previous display of forced labour, Jewish prisoners were not mentioned as a distinct category of forced labourers. The new display does note that Jewish prisoners were used for the construction of the bunker, and that this work detail was particularly brutal. A link is thereby established between the Jewish concentration camp prisoners, the bunker construction, and the specifically cruel treatment of these prisoners. While the Jewishness of the prisoners is noted, they are not listed as a separate category of concentration camp prisoners, however, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter, the Jewish prisoners were utilized very specifically for the OT projects, and were treated as less-then-slaves, as their survival was irrelevant. The singular brief reference and absence of any further details presents itself as covert silence, or as an "issue[s] that [is] hinted at but not explored."[727] I propose that the presence/absence of the Jewish victims in the new exhibit mirrors the anxiety and concern over the potential Jewishness of the human remains (as Mr. Meier-Scupin so poignantly put it "the Jewish card") which were discovered in the Ludwigsfeld in 2017, as well as the sequestration through which these dead were swiftly and effectively removed from the public sphere and placed in a more 'appropriate' environment.

In 2017, the former White House administration gave a statement on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day which did not mention Jews or antisemitism, which resulted

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[726] Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger, "Unpacking the Unspoken," 1104; Dessingue and Winter, *Beyond Memory*; Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*; Mason and Sayner, "Bringing museal silence into focus"; Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger "Unpacking the Unspoken," 1104.

[727] Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger, "Unpacking the Unspoken," 1104.

in considerable public uproar.[728] Somewhat similarly, in 2017, upon the inauguration of Canada's Holocaust Monument it was noted that the plaque did not mention Jews, antisemitism or the 6 million Jewish victims.[729] These omissions are particularly concerning as the Holocaust specifically refers to the genocide of the European Jews, and the persecution of this population was entirely based on their Jewish heritage. In response to Canada's omission, conservative member of parliament, David Sweet, stated: "If we are going to stamp out hatred toward Jews, it is important to get history right."[730]

While we may speculate as to the reasons for these omissions, it is noteworthy how little information is provided on the wider context in which Easter Jewish concentration camp prisoners were deported to Germany in 1944. What are the potential reasons and consequences of this covert silence?

I conclude, from the specific treatment and displacement of the human remains, the engagement of a Rabbi, and the public reassurance that "no evidence for mass graves had been discovered in the Ludwigsfeld," that the potential Jewishness of the dead individuals was a considerable concern. I propose two reasons for this unease: first, should the Jewishness of the human remains be determined, any future development of the site would have been immediately and for an indeterminate period of time put on hold, if not negated the development altogether. This, of course, would not be in the interest of the developer nor the city of Munich. Second, as I have discussed in the context of my own experiences learning about the Holocaust in Germany, the millions of dead Jewish victims were a source of shame, diffuse guilt and yet, the majority of Germans had very likely never met a Jewish person. As the extermination camps and the "Holocaust by bullets"[731] took place further East, it was convenient for Germans to believe and proclaim that they did not know about the Holocaust. This unease about Jewishness in Germany continues to the presence and raises questions and concerns: in an article in the New York Times in 2019, a Jewish family in Germany shared their experiences of a "new antisemitism" and the consequences of revealing their Jewish identity.[732] And while this experience appears to be in contradiction to Germany's much-lauded *Erinnerungskultur*, it underscores that antisemitism in Germany did not simply end with the liberation of the camps.

Here, I would like to return to Linke's observation that Germany tends to elegize certain aspects of the past and elide what remains uncomfortable and troubling, and what Linenthal refers to as a "comfortable horrible" Holocaust memory.[733] Thus, while – or because - the Holocaust has become part of Germany's commemorative landscape, it is largely considered to be an

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[728] Jake Tapper, "WH: No mention of Jews on Holocaust Remembrance Day because others were killed too," February 2, 2017, *CNN*, https://www.cnn.com/2017/01/28/politics/white-house-holocaust-memorial-day Accessed February. 4, 2020; Ben Jacobs, "No mention of Jews in White House's Holocaust remembrance address," January 27, 2017, *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/27/white-house-holocaust-remembrance-day-no-jews Accessed January 28, 2020.

[729] Toi Staff, "Canada Holocaust memorial omits any mention of Jews, anti-Semitism," October 5, 2017, *Times of Israel*, https://www.timesofisrael.com/canada-holocaust-memorial-omits-any-mention-of-jews-anti-semitism/ Accessed November 1, 2020.

[730] *BBC News*, "Canada forgets to mention Jewish people at Holocaust memorial," October 4, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-41506700 Accessed November 1, 2020.

[731] Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets.*

[732] James Angelos, "The New German Anti-Semitism," May 21, 2019, *New York Times Magazine*, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/21/magazine/anti-semitism-germany.html Accessed May 22, 2019.

[733] Uli Linke, "Emotional Anesthesia and the Museum of Corpse in Post-Holocaust Germany," *Genocide: Truth, Memory and Reconciliation*, ed. Alexander Laban Hilton and Kevin Lewis O'Neill (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 155-168; Linenthal, *Preserving Memory,* 267.

event in the past, and the worst happened in the East. This disconnect between the past and contemporary antisemitism points reflects the ambiguous and conflicted relationship between Germans and Jews. On the one hand, the acknowledgement and commemoration of the murder of the European Jews has become a positive political and social asset, while at the same time, contemporary Jews are perceived as 'other.'

Returning to my discussion of the limited representation of the Jewish concentration camp prisoners in the new exhibit in the BMW museum, and the anxiety around the potentially Jewish human remains in the Ludwigsfeld, I propose that these two aspects mirror the ambivalent relationship of Germans and Jews. If the Jewishness of some of the concentration camp prisoners in the former forced labour camp Allach – or more precisely, in the OT camp Karlsfeld – would be addressed in a more enhanced format in the BMW museum, the term "Holocaust" and "genocide," with all its implications of shame, guilt and atonement, would draw considerably broader public attention, specifically from Israel and the Jewish community in the United States. As the company seeks to represent itself in a favourable light in its corporate museum, a direct link between the corporation and the Holocaust would be undesirable; on the other hand, while the open acknowledgement of past wrong-doings can be perceived as a positive asset in the company's philosophy. Similarly, a confirmation of the Jewishness of the human remains in the Ludwigsfeld would have had considerable consequences for the development of the site, and also created a link between the city, the corporation and the Holocaust.

Returning to Butler's argument relating to the "power relations inherent in acts of collections and display,"[734] I return to the concept of value in relation to this exhibition. Kratz points to the persuasive framework which operates in museal exhibitions, which promotes specific impressions and understandings. Through text, light, objects and display strategies, exhibitions

> "convey specific meanings and associations, […] direct[ing] the synesthesia of exhibition display toward particular emphases and interpretations. They highlight topics and features as worth attention and select stories to tell, their importance buttressed by the implicit imprimatur of institutional authority."[735]

Building on these arguments, the new exhibit in the BMW museum does reveal the power relations within acts of display as well as underlying cultural and ideological assumptions. At the same time, due to its institutional authority, the BMW museum communicates its confidence in its company's philosophy via the display of this difficult heritage in its own corporate space.

Returning to my introductory questions, I have illustrated specific changes between the former display of forced labour in the BMW museum, and the new exhibit. While the new display clearly indicates a more open and historically accurate position by the company toward its difficult heritage, blind spots continue to exist in specific areas, which may mirror the two types of Holocaust memory with continue to exist in the German context: specific aspects of this difficult heritage continue to be problematic and too uncomfortable. In the context of the exhibit in the BMW museum, these aspects concern the reach of the Holocaust through the Jewish concentration camp prisoners, and the implied extermination of these prisoners through their work assignment. Finally, it is noteworthy that the exhibition does not address the findings in the Ludwigsfeld. This omission, in my interpretation, might suggest that while the company is now comfortable to address its exploitation of forced labourers, it is not yet comfortable to address the death

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[734] Butler, "Reflexive Museology: Lost and Found," 160.
[735] Kratz, "Rhetoric of Value," 32.

which these labourers suffered, or the direct connection with the Holocaust. Returning to Solomon's theory of the transformative potential of difficult heritage to function as a tool for critical history education, an important opportunity to go beyond the display of historical information has been missed. The death of forced labourers, concentration camp prisoners and Jewish less-than-slaves – even though this is a core element of the Holocaust – remains deeply unsettling and is ideologically and materially sequestered to specific places in society, namely, memorial sites and specific dedicated cemeteries.

CHAPTER 8. Objects, bodies, and historical learning: representing a difficult past in the new special exhibition *Zeitspuren* at the memorial site Dachau

On April 29th 2020, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp Dachau, the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau opened its new special exhibition *Zeitspuren – der KZ Aussenlagerkomplex Allach* [Traces of the Past. The Allach Subcamp Complex] in a separate room, which is clearly visible and easily accessible from the permanent main exhibition. This exhibition has at its centre a selection of artefacts which were found during the archaeological excavations in 2016 and 2017. The creation of this exhibition in the aftermath of the publication of the feasibility study in 2018 provides an opportunity to trace and illustrate the complex processes through which "invisible memory" is transformed into "a place of memory."[736] This exhibition is

[736] Jens Brockmeier, "Remembering and Forgetting: Narrative as Cultural Memory," *Culture & Psychology*, Vol. 8, Iss. 1 (2002): 15 - 43.

remarkable, not only in that it provides considerably more in-depth information on the former subcamp complex Allach and the number of original artefacts, but also, as Hr. Mathias Pfeil, general curator of the Bavarian state office for heritage conservation, notes it is the most important contemporary excavation of its kind in the state of Bavaria, specifically as a result of the vast number of artefacts which were discovered.[737]

Due to the central role which is given to objects in this exhibition and the role of material culture in Holocaust exhibitions overall, I will begin the discussion in this chapter with a (re)examination of the role and significance of the material and visual culture of the Holocaust in the context of Holocaust commemoration in broader terms. Next, I will examine how objects in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* are used to develop and support narratives, in a local, regional and global context of Holocaust memory discourses. Finally, and in line with the overarching focus of my dissertation on the role, agency and interpretation of dead bodies, I will focus on the representation of the findings of the human skeletal remains in the Ludwigsfeld.

Holocaust objects serve as symbolic representations of the millions of murdered victims in various forms: to underscore the individuality and humanity of each victim; to illustrate the unimaginable number of those who perished; as fragments of a pre-Holocaust era which was obliterated during the Second World War; as proof of the crimes and to explain the ruthless efficiency and brutality with which the victims were persecuted and killed. In absence of dead bodies, and thereby the impossibility to grieve the loss over the victims through social rituals, objects offer a tangible access to an otherwise unimaginable historical event. While a vast body of literature examines and discusses the role of Holocaust objects in a variety of settings, these analyses rarely consider the role of the dead and dead bodies in this context. By adding this element to my analysis, I argue, that this approach can facilitate an exploration of the possibilities and limitations of objects symbolically representing the loss of millions of lives, while the material remains of the victims – specifically in the setting of the exhibition *Zeitspuren* – allow us to directly engage with the suffering and fate of the victims.

As the symbolism of Holocaust iconography has become taken for granted, this exhibition offers an opportunity to re-consider the role of objects in Holocaust education and commemoration. Taking this re-evaluation a step further, I suggest that we explore why we turn to material culture to *symbolize* the suffering and the loss of millions of individuals, and propose instead to consider the role of the dead body in the commemoration and education of the Holocaust. I suggest that by the 21st century, in the context of the 'forensic turn,' archaeological approaches to genocide, as well as the study of the physical and social aspects of death (Thanatology), the material, political and socio-cultural role of the dead and dead bodies have assumed a new significance which goes beyond the shocking mounds of corpses which were an element of Holocaust memory, museums and memorial sites well into the 1990s. In this chapter, I will reconsider the taken-for-granted symbolism of the "canon of the victims' objects"[738] and objects-as-storytellers in the context of Holocaust museums and memorials, and instead contemplate the role and agency of the dead in the development of narratives: the representation of the findings of the human skeletal remains in the Ludwigsfeld within the context of the exhibition *Zeitspuren* offers a new way to consider the reality of the Holocaust and post-Holocaust discourses based on the

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[737] Mathias Pfeil, "Welcoming Address," *Virtual opening of the special exhibition "Traces of the Past,"* https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/history-online/virtual-opening/ Accessed October 10, 2020.
[738] Williams, *Memorial Museums*.

battered, 'forgotten', 'rediscovered' and displaced bodies of the murdered victims. By representing the specific suffering of the 12 nameless dead which were discovered on site, exhumed and interment in a deliberately subdued and matter-of-fact format, this strategy not only reminds us without euphemisms of the core of the Holocaust (the strategically planned murder of millions of individuals) but it also raises the question of the possibilities, limitations and implications of representing the death and suffering of the victims through objects.

1. Witnessing and commemoration in the absence of the dead: giving 'invisible' memory shape through objects

The material culture and traces of the Holocaust played a significant role from the time of the historical events, and in its aftermath. During the implementation of the 'Final Solution,' entire systems, structures and machinery were developed to facilitate the murder of millions of victims: the development of a transportation infrastructure to deport millions of people across the European continent to ghettos, forced labour camps, and extermination camps; the development of extermination facilities to carry out the genocidal activities; the plundering and redistribution of the victims' personal belongings; the 'harvesting' of the victims' bodies, including the removal of gold teeth and cutting of hair; the burial, burning, and finally the scattering or burial of the victims' ashes. With the liberation of the camps by the Allied forces, the remaining camps – their structures, the mounds of victims' belongings, dead bodies, ashes and bone fragments – became not only evidence of the unimaginable crimes but it also came to represent the vast numbers of those who were murdered. Widely distributed photographs and footage taken by the liberating armies, also became a fundamental part of 'imagining' the events, and the display of the victims' objects at the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial site heavily influenced the exhibition and display strategies in the Holocaust museums and memorial sites which began to emerge in the 1990s.[739] Through the perpetual use and repurposing of specific images by mass-media, an iconography of the Holocaust began to emerge which privileged specific aspects of material culture over others and evolved through repeated images and displays.[740] These icons are found in countless Holocaust exhibition and displays around the world: for example, the infamous cattle cars with which millions were deported to their deaths, can be found (either as an original or a replica) outside of the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York, at the Westerbork Holocaust memorial museum, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, at Yad Vashem, or at the Toronto Railway Museum

In the academic literature on the material culture of the Holocaust, vastly different opinions exist on the role and significance, meaning and symbolism of Holocaust objects, specifically in the context of museal use and display: while some scholars argue strongly against the use of Holocaust objects in teaching about the Holocaust and question the notion of an object's ability to 'witness' an event or 'tell stories,' others suggest that the material culture of the Holocaust has a mnemonic force and aura of authenticity which makes it specifically suitable to illustrate historical events or individual stories. It is noteworthy that some of the adversaries of the use of Holocaust objects in the museal context are scholars who took these positions at a point in time when the aesthetics, the possibilities of representations, and the format of Holocaust museums

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[739] Ibid.

[740] Leshu Torchin, *Creating the Witness: Documenting Genocide on Film, Video and the Internet* (University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Caroline Sturdy Colls, *Holocaust Archaeology: Approaches and Future Directions* (Springer International Publishing, 2015); Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget*; Zelizer, *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*.

and memorial sites assumed a central role in discussions about Holocaust memory: James Young, for example, asks

> "[w]hat precisely does the sight of concentration-camp artifacts awaken in viewers? Historical knowledge? A sense of evidence? Revulsion, grief, pity, fear?....[b]ut beyond affect, what does our knowledge of these objects – a bent spoon, children's shoes, crusty old striped uniforms – have to do with our knowledge of historical events?"[741] while

Omer Bartov suggests that Holocaust objects displayed in a museal context may trivialize the genocide.[742]Adversely, pointing to the agency of objects, Daniel Miller makes the argument, that they "continually assert their presence as simultaneously material force and symbol. They frame the way we act in the world, as well as the way we think about the world,"[743] and, similarly, the Curio Project, undertaken by the Ackerman Centre of Holocaust Studies, suggests that material traces of the Holocaust "are often traumatic objects" which "recall forgotten, hidden, and even destroyed pasts and retell the story."[744] On the other hand, Macdonald argues that the significance of Holocaust objects lies "in the 'story' which gets told" rather than in the 'aura' of the artefacts themselves,[745] while Stier points to the exemplary function of Holocaust objects in a museal context where they are employed to support specific narratives. Paul Williams refers to a "museum effect"[746] through which mundane objects are perceived in novel ways:

> "[t]his revaluation [of objects] provides personal objects with false significance in the sense that memorial museums ask them to represent a narrative that could never have been grasped for all its historic import in the moment." [747]

Williams argues that the notion that an object 'witnessed' the events past is nothing more than a "rhetorical strategy: "[b]y foregrounding *this* effect on *this* item […] the object has the effect of foreclosing the life to which the museum attaches it by reducing it to its period of greatest suffering."[748] Gilly Carr, from the perspective of the archaeologist, examines the mechanisms through which the material and immaterial value of small Holocaust objects is established by professionals, such as archaeologists, archivists, museum staff, and how the provenance of an object can contribute to the perceived 'value' of an object.

The implied notion that a form of embodied and disembodied memory of the Holocaust continues to exist, is perhaps 'contained' in material items and space, is at the root of the collection and display of Holocaust museums and memorial sites, albeit it remains obscure whose memory this would be: is it a birds-eye-type of memory that is all-seeing, perhaps similar to the photographs of the selection at the Auschwitz-Birkenau ramp in May 1944, taken from the roof of one of the carts with the full knowledge of the fate of the victims awaiting selection? Is it the memory of the individual to whom an object belonged from their pre-Holocaust life, or from their moment of death? The significance which is ascribed to the materiality of the Holocaust is

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[741] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 132.
[742] Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 182.
[743] Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1994), 105.
[744] Nils Roemer, "Revisiting Artefacts and their Histories: the Trauma of Objects and the Holocaust," February 2, 2017, *The Curio Project*, http://www.thecurioproject.com/curiostories/2017/2/1/revisiting-artifacts-and-their-histories-the-trauma-of-objects-and-the-holocaust Accessed October 30, 2020.
[745] Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*, 106.
[746] Williams, *Memorial Museums*, 28.
[747] Oren Baruch Stier, *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 114.
[748] *Ibid*., 31.

perhaps best illustrated with the extensive search for original objects, which was undertaken by researchers and curators of the USHMM who collect artifacts for the museum from Central and Eastern Europe during the late 1980s, and who were particularly struck by the impact of the locality and material world of the Holocaust which shaped and scarred the European landscape.[749] The artifacts seemed to have a greater immediacy in that they were 'at home' in the surrounding landscape and culture. In the context of their local environment artefacts were tangible traces of the past, left behind and collected at the location after their former owners had perished or been moved elsewhere. To the researchers of the USHMM, the original sites associated with the Holocaust appeared to be the 'real' center of the historical events, the objects were 'saturated' with historical events, and it was this specific aura of realness and tangibility that made specific objects attractive for a museal context.[750] Alongside objects, soil from concentration and death camps and venerated cemeteries in Europe was blended ceremonially with American soil on the event ground-breaking on October 16, 1985. Since the opening of the USHMM in 1993, the significance of the materiality of the Holocaust has further expanded and increased, which is not only represented by the increasing tourism to Holocaust-related destinations, but also through the emergence of a dedicated field of archaeology. Yet, this importance which is ascribed to the material remnants of the Holocaust takes for granted the very existence of specific discourses without critical exploration: first, the concept of collecting material elements of the past for the purpose of research and display is based on the dominance of vision as well as the power of visual discourses;[751] second, the concept of memorialization of past events is based on the notion that the past exists separately from the present, as well as the possibility that the past can be represented through objects in the present, which will allow the viewer to imagine and 'memorialize' the past;[752] and third, the notion of objects as being static and passive items, which – due to their material presence – stand in for historical events or locations.[753] These underlying ideas support the perception that tragic historical event can be 'absorbed' by landscapes, structures and objects; in turn, these "structures of recall,"[754] can facilitate an emotional and cognitive connection with a remote event.[755] At the same time, through the repeated use of specific locations, structures, and objects has created a "cosmopolitan Holocaust memory,"[751] in which Holocaust museums and memorial sites

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[749] Linenthal, *Preserving Memory*, 147.
[750] *Ibid*., 154-163.
[751] Latour, *Reassembling the Social.*
[752] Ingold, *Materials against materiality*.
[753] Sarah Pink, "Multimodality, multisensoriality and ethnographic knowing: social semiotics and the phenomenology of perception," *Qualitative Research* Vol. 11, Iss. 3 (2011): 261-276.
[754] The materiality of our environments as well as elements of material culture can be perceived as "structures of recall" in that they facilitate and generate memories. See also: David Gross, *Lost Time: On Remembering and Forgetting* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Alyssa Grossman, "Filming in the Light of Memory," *Transcultural Montage*, ed. Christian Suhr and Rane Willerslev (Berghahn Books: New York, Oxford, 2013); Alyssa Grossman, "The Memory Archive: Filmic Collaborations in Art and Anthropology," *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*, Vol. 9. Iss. 1 (2009); Avril Alba, *The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Zuzanna Dziuban, *The "Spectral Turn";* Cornelia Brink, Spring/Summer "Secular Icons: Looking at Photographs from Nazi Concentration Camps," *History & Memory*, Vol. 12, Iss. 1 (2000): 135-150; Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*.
[751] Levy and Sznaider, *Memory Unbound*.

perpetuate, contribute to and rely on the memories and recall by each individual visitor, as they connect the displayed objects and the implied historical narrative with other information they have acquired about the Holocaust (for example, in movies).

For the analysis of the exhibition *Zeitspuren* I will apply three key concepts: first, building on Young's question "[w]hat precisely does the sight of concentration-camp artifacts awaken in viewers?" and the concept of a "museum effect" through which objects are employed and utilized to represent a historical narrative, I will examine the use of objects in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* to discuss the interplay between materiality and narrative, to examine how precisely the objects acquire meaning in this exhibition, and what novel information about the Holocaust visitors may acquire from this display. I am specifically interested in the selection, display, grouping and interpretation of individual objects in the exhibition and how the meaning which is constructed through these processes may allow visitors to engage with the historical events.

Second, by building on Stier's concept of 'displacement,' the "re-placing of objects in an institutional context in order to create a fictional coherence," I will explore how memory works if artefacts are taken from their original context, and placed into another context.[752] While this is, of course, a considerably larger issue both in the context of the Holocaust as well as in relation to museums and collections more generally, as scholars we rarely have the opportunity to observe the construction of a specific memory narrative. Instead, by the time an exhibition is open to the general public, the content and narratives of the exhibition have already created a discourse in which the displacement of objects from their place of origin is taken for granted rather than explored.

2. Creating meaning and knowledge relating to the Allach subcamp complex through selection and context

Out of the over 1,000 artefacts which were discovered at the site of the former subcamp complex Allach – or, more specifically, the area of the former 'Jewish camp' - 100 were selected to be on display in the special exhibition *Zeitspuren*. This process of selection in itself is noteworthy, as the decisions were made by professional curatorial staff who made judgement calls based on which objects they believed would be best able to 'tell' a story about the former forced labour camp Allach. These processes are echoed by Anja Henschel, curator at the memorial site Dachau, who explains that most of the displayed objects were selected from the phase of the concentration camp and serve to illustrate the harsh conditions under which the prisoners had to survive – in sharp contrast to the considerable comfort of the guard troops. The location of the objects in the archaeological dig helped to allocate them to specific times of the camp, and in some cases, to individual persons, while objects indicate overlaps in time and usage.

The artefacts in the special exhibition *Zeitspuren* are grouped together in 11 themed display cases, including personal objects of prisoners, remnants of the American liberators, and items which were used by the camp guards. Each display case corresponds with an information board on the wall, which offers archival photographs and documents as well as explanatory texts. The temporal history of the camp informs the visual horizon along the walls which is organized chronologically in a circular path, starting with an overview of the actual camp complex to the experiences of the prisoners to the post-war usage of the site. A cohesive, overarching narrative is created around the chosen artefacts together with textual information, film and testimony, and two themes: a chronological timeline of the site itself, and life, death and survival of prisoners.

Considering the relative lack of material value of many of the artefacts, their oftentimes mundane function, their poor condition, and (in many instances) the absence of contextual

information (such as a personal narrative), the items themselves do not seem to offer any obvious or specific meaning: for example, what historical or emotional insights can be gained from a piece of rusted barbed wire, a broken telephone receiver, or a small collection of glass containers? From the specific grouping of the objects in the display cases and their contextual organization with an information board on the wall, we can perceive that each individual object in this exhibition was selected with an already established narrative in mind: for example, items belonging to the camp structure, to the guards, to the prisoners, and the liberators each provide a slightly different perspective. The overall narrative gains in breadth and depth through interpretive texts on the labels placed in the display cases alongside the objects, as well as through the information provided on the wall-mounted boards. A damaged mug, for example, acquires more significance through the interpretive label, which explains that a small piece of wire, attached to the handle of a mug, and easy to overlook, was vital so that the prisoner would not lose this precious item, which they needed to capture their largely liquid food. It is through the knowledge about the function of the small piece of wire, as well as the purpose of the mug itself, that its significance is established. It is through such associations that the object acquires meaning: we learn that the item determined the survival of the prisoner as it enabled them to catch liquids, thereby allowing them to eat from it; that in order to not lose this irreplaceable item, the prisoner fastened the mug to their uniform; the reality of the insufficient rations in the form of thin soups. These associations only come to light through the interpretive text and enable visitors of the 21st century to imagine the desperate circumstances under which a simple mug became an object which could determine life or death. If we imagine a visitor briefly gazing at the damaged mug, the object may not necessarily catch their eye or transmit its network of associations and meanings; yet, it is easy to imagine that after reading the descriptive label the same visitor may take a second look at the mug, this time with the narrative of the prisoner in mind.

While the artefacts were selected to illustrate specific aspects of the life in the camp, they are also meant to allow visitors to "witness the narrow grade between life and death of the prisoners."[756] For example, a fragment of a concrete pillar of the perimeter fence, a part of a broken sign, an insulator, a piece of barbed and the receiver of a telephone speak to the camp structure itself, perhaps illustrating the imprisonment of the forced labourers and the brutality of their environment. A metal washbowl, pieces of a porcelain bowl, and glass bottles stem from the camp's guards, highlighting the access to personal comforts the camp's staff enjoyed. Spoons, toothbrushes, mugs, and bowls may illuminate and give tangible shape to the primitive conditions under which the prisoners were forced to live. The location of the objects in the archaeological dig helped to allocate them to specific times of the camp, or to individual persons, and through associations, such as the provenance of the object, survivor testimony, or archival photographs, it is possible in some instances to trace an object across time and purpose: for example, the aforementioned wash bowl, which bears a stamp on the base which indicates the emblem of the German air force, shows blackening on the underside, which suggests that the bowl may have been used for cooking; this conclusion was further supported by a survivor, who testified that he boiled potatoes in a similar container after the liberation of the camp.

Returning to Young's provocative question "[w]hat precisely does the sight of

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[756] KZ Gedenkstaette Dachau website, "Begruessung und Einfuehrung" Dr. Gabriele Hammermann, *Virtuelle Praesentation der Sonderausstellung 'Zeitspuren*', https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/geschichte-online/virtuelle-eroeffnung-zeitspuren/ Accessed August 1, 2020.

concentration-camp artifacts awaken in viewers? […] what does our knowledge of these objects – a bent spoon, children's shoes, crusty old striped uniforms – have to do with our knowledge of historical events?"[757] I argue that while all objects in a museal context are used to create and support a narrative which may or may not enhance our knowledge of historical events, specific categories of objects allow for a person-to-person connection beyond the museum's narrative, while other objects may merely serve to illustrate.

In the context of the exhibition *Zeitspuren* a specific object invites visitors to engage on a more personal level: namely, what has been named the '*Budapester Schuh*.' The Budapester shoe consists of two separate parts - a leather top-part and a wooden sole. According to Henschel, the shoe was discovered in a simple trench which was meant to offer protection to the prisoners during aerial raids. The wooden sole is primitive with a simple nailed-on low heel. The elegant leather top portion of the shoe was fastened to the sole with rusted iron nails. Most of the top part of the shoe had come loose, and the shoe is therefore displayed as two pieces: the leather part, resting on a small stand, appears to float above the wooden sole via a small plastic stand. The shoe, clearly, has been fashioned out of two parts: the coarse wooden sole and the simple nails, which appear to have been materials from the camp environment; and the leather top part, with its elegant ornamentation and broguing, which stems from the time before the camp. The discrepancy between the attractive top leather piece, which hints at a civilian's life pre-Holocaust, the rough wooden sole and the simple nails used for fastening, invite us to not only contemplate the story behind the object before it came to the camp, but also the desperate circumstances, under which a prisoner attached the leather fragment to the bottom piece. At the same time, the fact that leather from a civilian shoe was used in the construction of this make-shift footwear is noteworthy, as it may provide information relating to the timeframe during which the shoe was deposited in the ground: during the last year of the war, the SS was no longer able to provide the prisoners with desperately needed clothing and footwear. Specifically for the Jewish forced labourers, who had to work on the construction site of the bunker during all seasons, regardless of temperatures or weather, protective footwear was essential and therefore a matter of survival.

Shoes have become one of the most prominent icons of the Holocaust: from the mounds of shoes which were discovered by the liberating armies in Auschwitz-Birkenau and Maijdanek, the placement of piles or individual shoes in Holocaust museums and memorial sites around the world, to the memorial of iron shoes alongside the Danube in Budapest, shoes are at the centre of Holocaust iconography.[758] The meaning of these shoes is multi-layered and complex and can serve to illustrate the dynamics of meaning-making and memory between the object and the contemporary viewer. If shoes are displayed *en masse*, visitors are affected by the sheer mass of the objects, as they each represent one individual victim. Shoes are intimate objects as their oftentimes subtle material tends to mold itself to the physiological specificities of their wearers, "the trace of the absent body that lived and marked it."[759] Shoes can also be expressions of an

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[757] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 132.

[758] Shoes have also become powerful mnemonic icons in other cultural contexts: for example, after the discovery of unmarked grave sites at the former residential school in Kamloops, BC, memorials were created across Canada consisting of children's shoes which were placed, for example, outside of churches. See for example: *CBC Kids News,* "Shoes honor the loss of 215 children at former residential school," May 31, 2021 https://www.cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/shoes-laid-to-honour-the-loss-of-215-children-at-former-residential-school Accessed July 1, 2021; *The Canadian Press*, "Vancouver memorial growing to honor 215 children buried at residential school site May 29, 2021 https://www.vicnews.com/news/it-was-devastating-chief-recalls-after-remains-of-215-children-found-in-b-c/ Accessed July 1, 2021.

[759] Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory,* 48.

individual's age, gender, class, personal taste, and perhaps occupation. Some of the styles of shoes resemble contemporary shoe styles and may remind a viewer of their own shoes they are wearing as they are walking through the exhibition. Visitors may feel that they 'recognize' the shoes, as if they are remembering them from their own experiences, or that they have encountered them elsewhere before. Specific types of shoes, such as children's shoes, affect visitors particularly strongly as their small size resembles the small bodies of children, while other types, such as elegant high heels, invite visitors to contemplate the specific circumstances under which an individual would have slipped on such an impractical pair of shoes – perhaps they were rounded up on the street, or given only minutes to gather personal belongings before their deportation? Shoes are used to move around in our environment, and thus materially and symbolically represent our journeys through life: in the case of the shoes of Holocaust victims, the shoes represent the journey from the last place at which their owner may have had the hope to survive, to the location at which they removed these shoes before they walked barefooted into the gas chamber. The individuality of each single shoe poignantly underscores the absent individual victim, while at the same time, the sheer mass of shoes and their very existence speak to the ever-efficient industrial mindset of the perpetrators who thought of these items in terms of useful spoils of war to be shipped back to Germany. It is precisely through the constellation of Holocaust iconography, the material continuity of the shoes (the existed 'back then' and in the 'here and now'), and the information which they provide about their owner, such as the individual's age or gender, that they function as powerful vehicles of memory which allow a personal engagement of the visitor without requiring detailed contextual information.

3. Memory dynamics across space

The removal of objects from their original context to the staged environment of a museum is, of course, a considerably larger issue which includes colonialism, cultural appropriation and European systems of collecting, categorizing, and display, which goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. In the context of this discussion, I am specifically interested how knowledge and meaning is constructed through the process of moving artefacts from their place of origin into an environment with an already established, over-arching narrative. I argue that the collection and selection of the 100 objects which are on display in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* as well as display strategies are closely related to broader national and global discourses of Holocaust memory, and that these artefacts acquire their significance and mnemonic aura precisely through these relationships, rather than through their materiality or provenance.

Scholars, such as Gilly Carr, Eva Heřmanová and Josef Abrhám, suggest that specific major concentration camp sites, such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen and Dachau, which "have become such sacred sites in European consciousness that the material culture from these places has also taken on a 'sacred' status in a way that is simply not the case at lesser-known sites."[760] Carr suggests that it was the significance of these major sites, with which visitors are likely familiar, which informed the selection of objects for the exhibitions at the Imperial War Museum (IWM) and the USHMM as "this would have lent the display more potency, more

[760] Gilly Carr, "The Small Things of Life and Death: An Exploration of Value and Meaning in the Material Culture of Nazi Camps," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 22 (2018): 531–552.

meaning, more resonance with visitors."[761] These major sites are those camps whose structures had remained relatively intact at the time of their liberation, and relatively large numbers of prisoners survived, both of which facilitated the subsequent memory discourses. As the allied armies liberated these camps, they took countless photographs and film footage of the material evidence they encountered, which were subsequently circulated widely, familiarizing the public with specific names, structures, and objects. Other sites, such as the extermination centres Treblinka, Sobibor or Belzec, had been obscured by the Nazis by dismantling structures and planting trees over the site, to destroy any evidence of the genocide. As a result, the actual size, layout and operation of the numerous camps remained unclear. With only small numbers of survivors and no visible remaining structures, many of the sites were not known to the liberators at the end of the war, nor were there any photographs of the camp during its operation or of material evidence.[762] On the other hand, the images and footage taken by the liberating armies of the material legacies of the sites showed concrete evidence of the crimes and the suffering of the survivors. The wide circulation of pictures of these specific sites with their distinct features (such as gates or gas chambers), certain place names which came to stand symbolically for the horror of the camps, and the re-creation and representation of these iconic sites (such as the site Auschwitz-Birkenau, which occurs in countless films relating to the Holocaust) contributed to the global recognition of iconic sites.

In their study of motivational and ethical issues relating to Holocaust tourism, Heřmanová and Abrhám point to the different "attractiveness" of individual sites, which relates to their history, type of camp, and possibly the number of victims.[763] Perhaps surprisingly, on the one hand, the authors found that preserved original buildings or objects were somewhat irrelevant with respect to "attractiveness" to visitors:

> "the high attendance [to some sites] show the areas in which not many objects survived (e.g. Dachau, Buchenwald) but which have the status of the first Nazi concentration camps (Dachau) built or that of UNESCO (Auschwitz-Birkenau), where the attendance probably correlates with the tragedy happened."[764]

On the other hand, the authors also found that "[a]ttractiveness is systematically higher in all Polish extermination camps […] one can also argue that 'the phenomenon Auschwitz' significantly competes with other Polish extermination camps, which are then necessarily seen as secondary."[765]

Carr proposes that the specific iconography of the Holocaust – such as camp structures, but also specific objects, which are repeatedly displayed in museums and memorial sites – reinforces and legitimizes the material and immaterial value of these items, thereby establishing what Smith refers to as 'Authorized Heritage Discourse.'[766]

Expanding on the idea of the "attractiveness" of specific sites over others, and linking Smith's concept of AHD with Levi's and Sznayder's idea of a 'global' or 'cosmopolitan'

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[761] *Ibid*., 537
[762] Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, (Pimlico, 1995), 249.
[763] Eva Heřmanová, "Holocaust Tourism as a part of the dark tourism," *Czech Journal of Social Sciences, Business and Economics*, Vol. 4, Iss. 1 (2015): 17-33.
[764] *Ibid*., 27.
[765] *Ibid*., 19.
[766] Carr, *The Small Things of Life and Death*, 537; Smith, *Uses of Heritage*.

Holocaust memory I suggest that the placement of the tangible heritage of the former subcamp complex Allach in the permanent exhibition at the memorial site Dachau exemplifies the dynamic processes of legitimization, meaning-making and knowledge production by linking a relatively unknown history and site with the broader narrative of a 'popular' and well-known Holocaust site. Smith describes as AHD as

> "often involved in the legitimization and regulation of historical and cultural narratives, and the work that these narratives do in maintaining or negotiating certain societal values and the hierarchies that these underpin."[767]

Sznaider and Levy point to the dynamic connection between local and global Holocaust memory discourses, noting that "[t]he inscription of Holocaust memories into the local contexts produces processes of de-territorialization but also of re-territorialization;"[768] rather than eradicating local memories entirely, global discourses and culture blend with them.[769] Between the original photographic images from the camps, which have become widely circulated, re-enacted scenes in films with sceneries using well-known Holocaust sites, to selfies taken with particularly 'famous' Holocaust icons, such posing under the "Arbeit Macht Frei" sign at Auschwitz I, images of the Holocaust inform the imagination, expectation, and finally the gaze of tourists.[770] The visitation of specific sites familiar from the visual culture of the Holocaust, and the gazing on sights represented in previously seen images allow the viewer to connect with a global Holocaust memory and to confirm it through their own participation in the gaze. Industries which participate in the global Holocaust memory, such Holocaust museums and memorial sites facilitate the visitor's gaze through staging and repetition;[771] for example, a reproduction of the previously mentioned "Arbeit Macht Frei" is displayed in the exhibition of the USHMM. The direct connection between the iconographic images of specific elements of Holocaust sites and objects and engagement of visitors with those exact elements points not only to the persuasive impact of a global Holocaust memory, but it also meets criteria which Smith ascribes to AHD: a dominant and legitimized way of writing and talking about heritage is established by dominant groups, which, in turn, influences heritage management practices.[772] In other words, Holocaust tourists who travel – for example - to Auschwitz-Birkenau expect to see the "Arbeit Macht Frei" sign due to its iconographic status, and may choose to snap a picture, which they subsequently share on social media, thereby perpetuating the circulation of these images. Encountering these iconographic features, which tourists have likely seen before (either in images or replicas) does not only allow visitors to connect with the past events through their authenticity – for example, by imagining the prisoners as they passed under the sign – but they also reinforce how we imagine the Holocaust. In the discussion around the value and meaning ascribed to objects of the Holocaust, Carr poignantly asks,

> [w]ho decides these things? Does meaning and value of such items exist in the eye of the beholder, or is it decided by archaeologists and museum professionals who

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[767] Laurajane Smith, "Discourses of Heritage: implications for archaeological community practice," *Open Edition Journals*, 2012, https://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/64148 Accessed August 20, 2020.
[768] Levy and Sznaider, *Memory Unbound*, 12.
[769] *Ibid*., 15.
[770] Crouch, David and Nina Lübbren (eds) *Visual Culture and Tourism* (Berg Publisher, 2003), 8.
[771] Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture*.
[772] Smith, *Uses of Heritage*.

> might interpret such items and decide whether they are meaningful or important enough to put on display?"[773]

I propose that by placing the artefacts which were retrieved from the site of the subcamp complex Allach in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* at the Dachau memorial site, the history of the Allach site is not only being connected with the considerably better known history of the Dachau camp, but it also connected to broader global Holocaust memory discourses, and thereby has become part of an Authorized Heritage Discourse of the Holocaust.

Specific objects were selected by experts to be included in the special exhibition and chosen over others for a particular purpose: perhaps they were considered to be particularly suitable to establish a narrative about specific groups of prisoners or guards; perhaps because they stand as an example of similar, perhaps less well-preserved items; personal items, such as photographs, can highlight a personal journey through the historical events, or speak to resilience and resistance. Returning to Carr's questions, the meaning of these objects and the historical narratives they are meant to support is pre-determined by the professionals who prepared the exhibition. In order to organize the retrieved artefacts into a coherent narrative, from the perspective of the curators, it would have been necessary to seek for specific 'themes' among the artefacts: for instance, which objects can help to illustrate the circumstances under which the prisoners were forced to exist? How can the comfort and status of the guards be represented? These professionals are, of course, operating in a significantly broader field of local, national and global Holocaust narratives and visual representations.

At the same time, the selection of artefacts in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* speaks to the impact of global Holocaust narratives: specific objects, such as the shoe, mugs, spoons, toothbrushes, small glass flasks, personal photographs are all Holocaust icons which appear in Holocaust museums and memorial sites around the world. These items therefore assume a meaning that expands far beyond the specific purpose they served in the Allach subcamp complex, and instead speak for the millions of victims who suffered and perished during the Holocaust. As visitors will gaze at these specific artefacts, they may experience recognition and familiarity, stemming from the mundane every-day purpose of the objects as well as from previously seen similar objects in other museums and memorial sites, in photographs or film. Through this association with similar displays in other Holocaust museums and sites, the items acquire further authenticity, legitimacy, and significance.

It is precisely the fact that these objects were discovered during an archaeological excavation, which gives the artefacts as well as the memory of the Allach site legitimacy: Smith notes that the practice of archaeology in itself is rooted in specific assumption, values and ideologies. Smith states that "AHD assumes that heritage is something that is 'found,' that its innate value – its essence – is something that will 'speak to' present and future generations."[774] And furthermore,

> "[t]he ADH also stipulates that [as] heritage is inevitably fragile and in need of protection by bodies of experts. Thus, those experts that deal with the material world take on the task of custodians of the human past. Within the AHD experts

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[773] Carr, *The Small Things of Life and Death*, 533.
[774] Smith, "Discourses of Heritage."

have a duty to not only protect the past, but to communicate the heritage values of that past to public audiences."[775]

In the context of the excavations of the Allach site, and the retrieval of artefacts, the very act of the archaeological dig underscores the implied value of the items – by value of being remnants of a Nazi forced labour camp - which will 'speak' to visitors. At the same time, by removing the objects from their original site, they are being protected by experts, and through their display in a museal context – also performed by experts – their value is communicated to the public. It is their value of being 'Holocaust objects,' which is legitimized through their placement in the memorial site Dachau, which gives these items significance and meaning. Considering this specific exhibition in the context of the controversy over, for example, a memorial project in the Ludwigsfeld, the placement of the objects in the Dachau memorial site serves the following purposes: first and foremost, due to its history as the largest subcamp of the Dachau main camp, a logical connection exists between the two sites. Second, as no appropriate facility exists at this point in the Ludwigsfeld, an exhibition on site would have required the creation of some sort of structure (temporary or permanent) to house the exhibit. Taking into consideration that considerable animosity exists between local residents and the city of Munich, as well as property owners and future developers, the potential set-up of such an exhibition on site would have required extensive networking and negotiating, mutual agreements with property owners, local residents, as well as the city of Munich. An exhibition on site would have also raised the issue of protecting the artefacts as well as the site from potential vandalism. Third, due to the large visitor numbers which frequent the Dachau memorial site, the exhibition about the former subcamp complex Allach receives considerably more attention than if the exhibition would have been created on site. The placement of the exhibition at the end of the permanent exhibition at the Dachau site makes it easily accessible for visitors and does not require additional travel. Finally, as the archaeological excavation, as well as the collection and selection of the objects, and the creation of the exhibition was undertaken by professional experts, the history of the Allach camp has been firmly rooted in the local, regional, and national Holocaust memory discourses. Sznaider and Levy pointed to the dynamics of de- and re-territorialization of local Holocaust memories, which are informed by and in return inform global Holocaust memory discourses.[776]

4. Containing unsettled and unsettling heritage

With the findings of a vast number of artefacts at the Allach site, and specifically the discovery of 12 human skeletal remains during the archaeological excavations in the Ludwigsfeld, local institutions and authorities could no longer ignore the emerging and disturbing history of the former Allach subcamp complex, which was quite literally unearthed from the past and oblivion. While the findings of a large number of contemporary artefacts was of great interest for local memory institutions, such as the memorial site Dachau, the discovery of 12 apparently 'forgotten' human skeletons added a significantly more unsettling and inconvenient aspect which forced the city of Munich and local institutions to actively engage with this history. The re-emergence of the seemingly long forgotten and buried history of the former subcamp changed the largely local discourses around the memory of the site, which were primarily based on hypotheses and anecdotes, to concrete negotiations between representatives of various agencies,

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[775] *Ibid*.
[776] Levy and Sznaider, *Memory Unbound*, 12 and 15.

offices and institutions over the ownership, treatment, and future of the site and its remaining material culture. While the exhumed human remains were reburied elsewhere in 2017 within three months and were therefore 'out of sight, out of mind,' the negotiations over the future of the site and a potential memorial project found expression in the feasibility study, published in 2018.

Intriguingly, comparatively little attention has been attributed to the meaning of the findings of the human remains, nor has their re-emergence and the processes and decision-making around their re-burial been considered in any of the proposed memorial projects. I argue that while the discovery of a large number of artefacts can be considered positive event in that the objects could be utilized to develop a historical narrative around the former Allach subcamp complex which could be incorporated into already established local memory discourses, it was specifically the discovery of the human remains which added a disturbing and potentially disruptive material dimension which could no longer be ignored.

While the knowledge of multiple deaths and previously existing graves on site was an established historical fact, the actual material findings of human remains which evidently had been on site since 1945, and which had been 'forgotten' during previous dedicated exhumations, was an unforeseen and – for some interested parties - unwelcome new development. After all, local memory institutions had long been content with the narrative that all dead bodies had been retrieved from the site and reburied elsewhere. At the same time, what does the 'forgetting' of multiple human remains during previous exhumations indicate about the thoroughness, consideration and respect of local authorities at the time and in the present? Did the discovery and reburial of the 12 human skeletal remains truly close the chapter on the suspected mass graves in the area, or did it rather confirm these theories and suggest that further human remains might be located elsewhere on site, and what are the implications of such a possibility? What would a potential or confirmed Jewish ancestry of the remains imply and how could these unforeseeable and potentially extensive (and expensive) impacts be negotiated? I suggest that the choice to create an exhibition on the archaeological findings at the former subcamp complex Allach at the Dachau memorial site was a deliberate strategy to 'contain' and interpret the disturbing findings of the remains, and thereby to control potential further interest and implications.

As I have previously argued, the dead bodies of the victims are at the core of Holocaust memory, and not surprisingly, the role of the corpses in Holocaust education and commemoration has been problematic: first and foremost, the dead bodies of the victims of the Holocaust came as shock to the liberating armies and to many German civilians. The Allies were unprepared for the scope of carnage during and after the defeat of Germany.[777] The dead bodies were politicized and utilized to confront and remind Germans of their role in the crimes of the Nazi regime, and to establish their collective guilt.[778] In the German context, the dead bodies of the Holocaust did not represent the terrible loss of individual lives which should be commemorated with dignity and humility, but rather an inconvenient and shameful reminder of their own complicity. Yet, in spite of the questionable effectiveness of the atrocity propaganda and confrontation policy which was utilized by the American army, similar methodologies continued to be used in German memorial sites well into the 1980s in the form of mural size photographs of dead bodies.

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[777] Mauriello, *Forced Confrontation*.
[778] *Ibid*., 153; Goldstein*, Capturing the German Eye,* 21.

In sharp contrast to this overt and undeniable representation of corpses, the reality of the countless dead bodies of the Holocaust has been obscured by the fact that the vast majority of Holocaust victims have been obliterated to the point of fragile fragments of ashes which in itself made any identification of individuals impossible. This, of course, further served the purpose of the perpetrators to eradicate all traces of their genocidal activities while it effectively prevented a personal commemoration of each individual victim. While it is possible to imagine an individual person based on skeletal remains, it is impossible to imagine the countless individual dead whose fragile miniscule remains are part of the mounds of human ashes which are distributed across the European landscape. The unimaginable number of victims, the sheer number of corpses discovered in the liberated camps, and the necessity to deal with the remaining dead bodies of the camps as well as along the routes of the death marches, prevented the engagement with the death of individual victims, and instead required a symbolic representation and commemoration through the material remnants of the dead.

In this context, the discovery of the 12 human skeletal remains in the Ludwigsfeld thus does not only offer an opportunity to reassess the meaning and role of human remains in the context of the Holocaust in general and in the German context specifically, but it also raises intriguing question about continuities and changes in German perceptions of the dead bodies of Holocaust victims. In my subsequent discussion I argue that the human remains call into question the purely symbolic representation of death and suffering through objects, and that their reemergence generated feelings of deep discomfort and embarrassment among the interested agencies, institutions and authorities. While the discovery of artefacts which could be utilized to illustrate a historical narrative could be perceived as a positive event, the findings of the human remains needed to be managed and contained which was effectively achieved through the deliberately quiet exhumation, examination and reburial with notably little local and no national or international attention. However, because information about the findings of the human remains had entered public discourse through a brief local press release and the published feasibility study, the narrative was controlled further by incorporating specific aspects of these findings into the exhibition *Zeitspuren*. While on the one hand, the chosen format of this inclusion in the exhibition indicates a new approach to the dead bodies of the Holocaust victims, it represents, at the same time, a strategy to manage and contain the disturbing reality of these findings: the undeniable and horrific reality of individual suffering and death, and the neglectful and dismissive disregard by German authorities and institutions during the post-war decades.

As the visitor follows the intended visitor path of the exhibition in a roughly circular direction, a display case and a related information board on the wall address the findings of the human remains during the archaeological excavation in 2017. The display in the case contains drawings of the skeletal findings in situ, and a handful of remnants which were discovered with the remains: buttons, robe hooks, and a spoon, and a few labels with explanatory text. The information board associated with this display case provides information about the exhumation of the dead in 1950 and 1955, and the subsequent burial on the Leitenberg cemetery. Additionally, information is provided on the local and individual initiatives for commemoration, including photographs of the barracks as well as the plaques.[779]

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[779] This display case is situated toward the exit of the exhibition, where behind the display case, to the left of the exit, the names of 362 dead of the former Allach subcamp complex are streamed; this monitor is flanked by two screens which stream survivor testimony.

The arrangement in the display case requires the visitor to bend over the display case to read the text and examine the drawings as well as the small artefacts. The buttons, robe hooks and the spoon are arranged together with labels which explain with which individual the artefacts were found: for example, one label states

> "Buttons and garment hook, found between the right upper arm and abdominal region of person 10. This person is a man aged between 20 and 30; two unhealed fractures are evident; the right shoulder girdle and right lower jaw branch."

In the virtual tour, curator Anja Henschel notes that the burial arrangement of the dead suggests a simple but careful interment, and the buttons and robe hooks indicate that these individuals wore civilian clothing. Both of these aspects may suggest that these dead were buried after liberation. Henschel emphasizes the frequent fractures which were present on most if not all individuals, which do not necessarily indicate the cause of death but offer poignant information about the mistreatment and abuse these prisoners had suffered during the years, months and weeks leading up to their dead.

This form of representation is remarkable in that it goes beyond the listing of names of victims, survivor testimony, or photographs of individuals. This display clearly speaks to the suffering endured by specific persons, while at the same time, it also highlights that no further information about these victims has remained. The display of the little traces of personal items which are all that remains from the victims' lives, underscores the bodily and spiritual annihilation these individuals suffered as a result of racial ideologies. The fact that they had been 'overlooked' or 'forgotten' during previous exhumation illustrates the lack of significance and respect these individuals continued to suffer even in death. The noting of the individual's sex and age, together with the injuries they sustained are a considerably more subtle approach, yet, a highly effective strategy to depict death and suffering in contrast to the 'shock' approach which was taken in the past with mural-size photographs of corpses; at the same time, the description of the injuries suffered by individual persons – rather than an unimaginably large number of victims – make a powerful statement that the suffering and death of each single victims was a deeply personal experience, which can easily be forgotten in statistics. The display of the sketches of the skeletal remains in situ, the listing of their individual ages, gender and their injuries provide an intimate glimpse at death while at the same time it also speaks to the impossibility of reconnecting these skeletal remains with a person's identity.

Finally, the placement of this display case alongside the related information board on the wall, the survivor testimony and the list of victims' names at the end of the exhibition powerfully speaks to the narrow line between life and death in the camp. This display does not follow the common approach of Holocaust museums and memorial sites, which closes the exhibition with the representation of the liberation of the camps and survivor testimony; stories of emigration and the building of new lives elsewhere; references to other genocides around the world and an invitation to pledge to combat hate and discrimination – rather, it confronts visitors with the final outcome of these crimes and points to the irreplaceable, irretrievable and anonymous loss of life. Rather than allowing visitors to leave on an uplifting message (the survivors were liberated, emigrated and rebuild lives elsewhere while the perpetrators were persecuted and punished) this display ends of a note of what cannot be repaired or recovered.

The addition of this tangible display of the deaths of specific individuals – although we may never learn more about their lives, their identity or the cause of their death – in the special exhibit at the Dachau memorial site signifies a considerable shift in the perception and possibilities

of representation of the dead and dead bodies in the context of forced labour for German corporations. While the previous exhibition of the issue of forced labour in the permanent exhibition in the memorial site did address subcamps of the main camp Dachau, the representation did not reveal the brutality of 'extermination through labour.' It was noted that hundreds of prisoners died as a result of work and living conditions at the BMW bunker site, yet it was simultaneously stated that the site was controlled by the *Organisation* Todt. This form of representation – although historically correct – ascribed the responsibility for the suffering to a Nazi organization which no longer exists rather than the German corporation. At the same time, the reference to 'hundreds of prisoners who died' did address death while at the same time effectively avoiding to provide further details. This form of representation of forced labour at BMW, alongside the well-known propaganda photographs of workers inside a production hall, continued to perpetuate the impression that forced labour was preferable to the extermination camps in the East. At the time of the opening of the current permanent exhibition at the Dachau memorial site in 2003 (the planning had begun several years prior) the issue of forced labour had only gradually begun to emerge in academic research while German corporations continued to avoid assuming responsibility. In this context, the subdued representation of this topic specifically in relation to the responsibility of (local) German corporations is reflective of the overall blind spot which continued to exist.

The considerably more visible representation of the subcamp complex Allach, the responsibility of the corporation BMW, and finally the undeniable and deeply disturbing suffering and death of the twelve individuals whose remains were found are all indicators of a socio-political shift which allows for a less restrained representation of the reality of forced labour in the subcamps. At the same time, the presence of dead in the new exhibition *Zeitspuren* also speaks to the deeply unsettling, disturbing impact the discovery of the human remains. Returning to my arguments in the chapter on dead bodies (see chapter 5.) and specifically Verdery's argument that "dead bodies have posthumous political life in the service of creating a newly meaningful universe"[780] I propose that the dead of the subcamp complex Allach are in fact at the very centre of the new exhibition – even though the display is not centred around them. Yet, the undeniable evidence of their personal terror and suffering and the pathetic fragments of their lives which have remained makes the suffering of the prisoners in the subcamp complex considerably more tangible. Returning to Kratz' concept of the "rhetorics of value," I suggest that the incorporation of information on the 12 human remains formulates a different perception, consideration and opportunities for the representation of the victims of the Holocaust.[781] Not only does this display demonstrate that the suffering of the death can be represented effectively yet without seeking to elicit shock, but it also ascribes meaning and 'value' to addressing the suffering and death of these individuals: rather than seeking to impress on the visitor the unimaginably large and abstract number of deaths, this significantly more muted approach allows visitors to engage with the suffering of one specific individual, their lives, heritage, relationships, histories, and their memories. While the former form of representing large mural-size images of mounds of dead bodies, to which visitors could any relate in horror, the meaning and value of this new approach

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[780] Verdery, *Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 127.
[781] Kratz, "Rhetorics of Value," 21.

which re-assesses the representation of death and suffering, serves to "help […] define such broad fields as aesthetics, history, and morality."[782] The fact that one of Germany's most prominent memorial sites includes this display into their exhibition space may be an indicator of the impact of the 'forensic turn,' through which the meaning and significance of human remains, as well as our social, cultural and political practices relating to death, assume new significance. Pointing to the 'value' of objects in museum collections or displays, Kratz notes that "[w]hen museums acquire a particular object or kind of object, it affects market values for similar objects," and this value is further enhanced in relation to the display of the dead in the exhibition *Zeitspuren* precisely because of the memorial site's institutional authority.[783] The inclusion of information about the findings of the human skeletal remains in the Ludwigsfeld into the exhibition, and the choices regarding the display – an archeological drawing rather than a photograph, for example – indicate a new approach to the materiality of death in one of Germany's most prominent memorial sites. Yet, at the same time, specific aspects of this display remain problematic.

First, the interpretation on the information board and the labels in the display case create a closed narrative, which does not facilitate a critical engagement with the presence of the skeletal remains on site, nor with any of the procedures with which the dead were treated during the post-war years. For example, a label in the display case states that

> "in 1950, excavations accrued out at the same place recovered skeletons, which were then reburied. The area was closed off and named 'Karlsfeld camp cemetery.' In 1955, the French Ministry for War Victims exhumed the remains of 111 dead persons and transferred them to the Leitenberg cemetery of honor near Dachau. Presumably the twelve corpses were overseen (sic). To date, 362 persons could be verified by name who died in the Allach subcamp. Presumably the number of prisoners who died was far greater."

Similarly, the information board states that

> "[t]he number of deaths rose greatly in the months immediately prior to liberation. After liberation mass graves were dug. The total number of dead identified by name at the Allach subcamp complex stands today at 362. This figure does not include those who died in the camp and on the death march whose names could not be identified."

While both notes provide historically correct information, such as the creation of mass graves, the exhumation of the dead, and the indeterminate number of deaths, these statements to not provide the opportunity to visitors to engage with the inherently problematic aspects of the treatment of the dead: why and by whom were human remains exhumed in 1950? How is it possible that human remains were exhumed even though an eye-witness had reported at least 50 grave markers with Jewish inscriptions, and a Jewish bible was discovered during the exhumations in 1950, thereby creating at least a likelihood that some individuals might have been of Jewish heritage and their exhumation would have been a violation of Jewish law? [784] Why did (only) the French

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[782] Kratz, "Rhetorics of Value," 21.
[783] *Ibid*., 22.
[784] *Stadtarchiv* Muenchen, *KZ Karlsfeld Bestattungsamt*, DE-1992-BES-0377; *Stadtarchiv* Muenchen, *KZ Karlsfeld Bestattungsamt*, DE-1992-BES-0430.

Ministry for War Victims exhume their dead in 1955? How is it possible that the 12 corpses were "presumably" overlooked during two individual exhumations? By whom were they overlooked – German authorities, the French Ministry? What happened to the Karlsfeld camp cemetery? Where in the area were the mass graves created, and what happened to them during the post-war years? While both notes indicate the current number of confirmed identities, are further efforts being made to identify further victims? If the significant choice was made to address death and the findings of the human skeletal remains in the area of the former Allach subcamp complex, why is this opportunity limited to simply providing historical information, rather then inviting visitors to engage more deeply with the issue of death in the aftermath of the Holocaust? Eva Silvén argues that

> "museums, as public institutions, have a moral obligation to act in relation to contemporary processes, as well as special opportunities, through the authority and the serious purpose that is usually associated with them. Museums have a solid platform for involvement in complex events, for engaging in a critical duel with the problematic sides of history […] this responsibility also includes showing empathy and playing a part in society's emotional crisis management and reconciliation on the basis of the museums' spe cific abilities, such as offering a non-commercial, non-confessional place for reflection on existential matters in a historical and cultural perspective."[785]

Exhibitions can provide an opportunity for engagement with what Silvén and Björklund describe as "Difficult Matters."[786] Building on this idea, Katrine Tinning uses vulnerability as a concept which can be employed in museum pedagogy to explore difficult matters: "[v]ulnerability is defined as openness to an encounter with the Other as being different, which is conditional of an ethical transformation of existing perceptions of self, others and the world."[787] The concept of vulnerability can thus provide a space "for discussions on the pedagogy of exhibitions of Difficult Matters and the ethical responsibility of museum professionals in public museums."[788] The transformative potential of difficult matters is, of course, at the center of the *Gedenkstaette* as well Holocaust museums and memorials: after all, "memorial museums attempt to mobilize visitors as both historical witnesses and agents of present and future political vigilance."[789]

The 'difficult matter' in the exhibition *Zeitspuren*– an exhibition which provides information on the difficult history of the former subcamp complex Allach embedded in an institution which is likewise dedicated to the difficult history of the Dachau concentration camp – in my interpretation is the deeply moving and personal representation of the rediscovered human skeletal remains. While the display offers a different point of access to understand the reality of forced labour camps, the potential pedagogical impact is limited as the interpretation on the information board as well as the labels continues what Linke describes as a tendency in Germany to elegize

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[785] Eva Silvén, "Difficult matters. Objects and narratives that disturb and affect," *The Museum as Forum and Actor*, Museum of National Antiquities, Stockholm (2010): 133-146, 140.
[786] Eva Silvén and Anders Bjorklund, "Detecting difficulty," in *Ting och Berättelser som Upprör och Berör*, ed. Eva Silvén, and Anders Bjorklund (Stockholm: Nordiska Museet, 2006).
[787] Katrine Tinning, "Vulnerability as a Key Concept in Museum Pedagogy on Difficult Matters," *Studies in Philosophy and Educatio*n, Vol. 37 (2018): 147–165, 147.
[788] *Ibid*., 147.
[789] Tinning, "Vulnerability as a Key Concept," 152.

certain aspects of the past and elide what *remains* uncomfortable and troubling."[790] [my emphasis] The display explains a specific aspect of the camp's history (namely the ever-increasing numbers of deaths prior to liberation), which is further underscored by the reference to the discovery of the human skeletal remains, yet, the situation in itself appears to have been resolved, and any remaining questions appear to have been addressed through the reburial of the dead and the creation of a special exhibition, which offers information on the suffering of the victims at the Allach site. The potential, I propose, lies in "what remains uncomfortable and troubling" which is the unexplored and at times obscure engagement – or lack thereof – with the site's dead. By creating a seemingly 'resolved' narrative, visitors may leave the exhibition with the comfortable knowledge that all past injustices have been resolved by publicly closing a gap in historical information and knowledge. Yet, it is the uncomfortable, unresolved, and perhaps un-resolvable aspects, continuities, and realities of the camp's past which reach into the present day and future, which in themselves create a counter-narrative to what Linenthal refers to as a "comfortable horrible" Holocaust narrative.[791]

Amidst the ongoing controversy over a the potential, the shape and size of a memorial project at the site of the former force labour camp Allach, the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau has taken the initiative to develop and host the new special exhibition *Zeitspuren – der KZ Aussenlagerkomplex Allach*. The exhibition is without questions highly significant for the representation of the issue of forced labour in German memorial sites general, and information on the former subcamp complex Allach more specifically. While the previous display of forced labour in the permanent exhibition at the Dachau memorial site noted individual companies, such as BMW, Messerschmitt and Agfa, the relationships between the corporations and the forced labourers remained largely unexplored, which can be interpreted to be a reflection of the slow emergence of this topic in broader terms. One of the most significant aspects of this exhibition is the inclusion of information on the findings of 12 human skeletal remains, which addresses the issue of the prisoners' death and suffering. While images of the dead bodies of Holocaust victims have been utilized previously in a range of formats, I suggest in this chapter that the inclusion of this disturbing topic and the unsettling findings into the exhibition *Zeitspuren* is a reflection of the relatively recent 'forensic turn,' the emergence of new archaeological approaches to genocide, as well as the study of the physical and social aspects of death (Thanatology). These new approaches to death and dead bodies do not take-for-granted the countless victims of the Holocaust, and their complex diffuse material and immaterial presence and absence, but instead seek to engage with and explore the meaning, agency, and role of the dead in the broader field of Holocaust memory and commemoration.

The findings of the human skeletal remains during the archaeological excavation in 2017 is significant as it raises unsettling questions about the perception and treatment of the dead during the post-war era, but also in that the intact skeletons allows for a significantly more personal and intimate understanding of the victims' suffering and death than statistical results or symbolic representations of victims. As a result of the approximate age range, gender, and injuries which were determined by forensic anthropologists, these individuals regained their individuality and humanity to a limited degree. The constellation of information on the individual remains alongside the pathetic remnants of their lives, such as buttons, illustrates effectively the absence of

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[790] Linke, "Emotional Anesthesia and the Museum of Corpse,"155.
[791] Linenthal, *Preserving Memory*.

further information and the extent to which the Nazis succeeded in their obliteration of the victims' lives and bodies.

What is notably absent from this exhibition, however, is the lack of engagement with the controversy over the future development of the site; the role of corporate responsibility; and specific prisoner groups. These specific themes would have provided an opportunity to critically examine the processes which determine the creation of (or lack thereof) a memorial project, and the inherent tension between the protection of heritage sites and human remains, necessary urban development, and which narratives emerge in public memory discourses. Memorial sites emerge out of oftentimes long and bitter battles over the interpretation of the past and conflicting interests, and do not necessarily meet the interests and requirements of all stakeholders. As such, a more detailed representation of the current and ongoing controversy over a memorial project in the Ludwigsfeld would have allowed visitors of this exhibition to consider the aspects which contribute to the commemoration of a difficult past in the face of contemporary challenges. It would also invite visitors to consider the role of Holocaust museums and memorials in the creation of narratives, and to engage with the position of power and authority which is ascribed to these institutions.

While the exhibition *Zeitspuren* clearly addresses the role of the corporation BMW in the creation of the Allach subcamp complex, as well as in the exploitation of forced labourers, it remains uncritical with respect to the post-war silence of the company to the topic. Clearly, this is a part of a much broader topic which in itself deserves to be explored and examined publicly; however, by focusing on one specific corporation and their position to their dark past as a case study, a critical engagement with the role of German corporations during the Third Reich and the decades-long post-war silence about forced labour would illustrate the long-lasting impacts of human rights violations, social injustice, and racial ideologies. It would raise questions about the possibilities for responsibility and reconciliation, and how past injustices might be addressed in a satisfactory manner.

The most significant absence of information, however, relates to specific prisoner groups, specifically women and children. Women were present in the forced labour camp complex not only in the brothel and as forced labourers who, after their shift at BMW, cleaned the floors of the barracks of French and Polish men.[792] By late 1944, and in 1945, Jewish as well as Sinti and Roma women were deported to the Allach camp, were approximately 1,000 women were liberated by the US army. Together with a group of Jewish women, a number of young children were also deported to the Allach camp and were subsequently sent to Bergen-Belsen. Children as young as 15 years old were forced to work on the BMW construction bunker site.[793]

A series of photographs of women after the liberation of the camp was taken by the US army, yet, these photographs remain absent from both, the new exhibition at the BMW museum as well as at the exhibition *Zeitspuren*.

Leading up to the archaeological excavations in the Ludwigsfeld in 2016, and after the (unexpected) discovery of the human remains in 2017, the controversy over a memorial project at the site of the former subcamp complex Allach was at a tipping point: the possibility of mass graves on site had the potential to draw considerable public attention and to put a stop to any

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[792] Werner, *Kriegswirtschaft und Zwangsarbeit*, 214.
[793] In his publication *Die Toten von Dachau-Allach*, Mai lists 17 children under the age of 18 among the documented prisoners who perished in the camp.

plans for future development. At the same time, the public advocacy of Klaus Mai for a memorial project on site through exhibits, publications and a website had created enough waves and had drawn attention to the site, that it was no longer possible to simply ignore this difficult heritage. The long-standing neglect of this history and site had the potential to call into question the commitment of the city of Munich to commemorate the victims of the Third Reich, while, at the same time, it inconveniently pointed to the role of the corporation BMW during the Nazi era. So far, the history of the Allach subcamp had been contained in fragments at the memorial site Dachau, at the BMW museum, and at the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism. With the discovery of the human remains, the past had literally come to the surface and disturbed not only the dead, but also the established narrative in which this chapter of the company BMW had been addressed and closed.

With the publication of the feasibility study, a demonstrative and public step was taken by the appropriate institutions – the city of Munich and the memorial site Dachau – toward the consideration of appropriate memorial projects. Perhaps not unexpectedly, the proposed projects were unsatisfactory to several stakeholders, and so far no initiative has been demonstrated by the city of Munich. Yet, 'the cat is out of the bag,' so to say, and public steps needed to be taken to manage the discourses and representation of this difficult history. The *Gedenkstaette* Dachau as one of Munich's most prominent institutions dedicated to the history of the Nazi era, as well as in its role as the former main camp of the subcamp system, thus took initiative and incorporated this knowledge and memory into its own exhibition and site. However, by incorporating the history of the Allach subcamp complex conceptually and materially into the memorial site Dachau rather than into a memorial project on the original site, the unique and complex history of the former camp has become part of a broader official Holocaust narrative.

CHAPTER 9. Curatorial dream *Lacuna*

> "The counter-monument accomplishes what all monuments must: it reflects back to the people - and thus codifies their own memorial projections and preoccupations." (Young, 1992)[794]
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> "While surely all monuments are subject to audience reception and interpretation, counter-monuments depend almost entirely on their audience to interpret their intent, making the artist a sort of prisoner of his/her audience. Their reliance on social interaction, their stated objective to bridge the distance between spectator and object, makes their public reception vital to their successful social implementation. In this context, the received understanding of the counter-memorial project is therefore far more socially and historically significant than is the initial conception by the artists." (Noam Lupu, 2003)[795]

1. Curatorial dreaming about a memorial project dedicated to the victims of the Allach subcamp

In my previous chapters, I examined current approaches to representations of forced labour and the former forced labour camp Allach in the context of the BMW musem and the Dachau memorial site through a critical lens. Analysis and critique are, of course, a scholar's daily bread, yet, these approaches do not necessarily include constructive or practical concepts or solutions for the problems addressed. Scholars and curators Erica Lehrer and Shelley Butler sought to bridge this divide between the academic research and the public, including museums, through their methodology of "curatorial dreaming." Curatorial dreaming is an "innovative method of engaged analysis and critique" which allows scholars to "work[ing] outside our comfort zones, in a constructive rather than deconstructive mode" and offers "an opportunity to engage with wider audiences in new ways."[796] Curatorial dreaming as a methodology allows me as a scholar and researcher to engage with my field in different ways, and also challenges me to think creatively and constructively about the issues which I have identified over the course of my research.

As I explored the memory of the former forced labour camp Allach in Munich in the fall of 2018 the questions of how to 'exhume' and give tangibility to this difficult past in the present, to what aim, and in whose interest, was central to my research. During my fieldwork in Munich in 2018, I found myself frequently straddling the fence between insider-and-outsider, not only as a now Canadian, visiting the city where I had grown up, but also in the sense that I sought to imagine an exhibition or installation in this very specific socio-political, historical, institutional and communal space, thereby crossing disciplinary and professional boundaries.[797] The current tabula rasa of the Allach camp's memory offers a unique and precious moment in space and time at which established narrative formats can be revisited and re-narrated in novel ways, without the implied limitations and challenges of, for example, the rehashing of an existing permanent exhibit. It can be assumed with some certainty, that in the future, the history of the former

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[794] James E. Young, "The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 18, Iss. 2 (Winter 1992): 267-296, 283.
[795] Noam Lupu, "Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined: The Countermemorial Project in 1980s and 1990s in Germany," *History and Memory*, Vol. 15, Iss. 2 (Fall/Winter 2003): 130-164, 130.
[796] Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams*, 19.
[797] *Ibid*., 5.

subcamp complex Allach will be disseminated in specific formats in one if not multiple memory institutions in Munich, and perhaps a memorial project may even be created in the Ludwigsfeld. The shape this memory will take will likely be informed by existing format of historical narratives, mainly focusing on offering additional historical information while at the same time commemorating the victims. However, this approach offers little insight into the reality of decade-long silences about specific events or victim groups, the discourses through which memories re-surface, or the struggle over the 'proper' representation of the past – all of which, in my interpretation, are aspects which are as significant as the historical events, as they relate to contemporary societal perceptions and priorities.

Memorial projects, which focus specifically on the historical event and 'tell' the story from a seemingly objective neutral perspective can appear to offer a completed narrative which ends with the creation of a memorial site through which the event is remembered. Through the installation of a memorial project dedicated to a specific event, a resolution is provided which requires no further exploration or interrogation. Yet, this format does not invite visitors to relate the past to the present, nor does it offer an opportunity to reflect on how a narrative is developed or by whom, thereby obscuring the interests of invested stakeholders, imbalances of power and authority. Rather, it supports the notion that the historical narratives told by dedicated institutions, such as museums or memorial sites, or city departments, are comprehensive, true and unbiased. At the same time, all projects which seek to educate about or commemorate past events are, naturally, subject to limitations such as funding or proprietorship, which considerably contribute to the final shape and dimension of a project.

2. Theoretical and methodological considerations

The methodology of curatorial dreaming allows for significantly more flexibility and freedom without the usually significant barriers, such as costs, differing expectations and opinions, and spatial and temporal limitations. Curatorial dreaming as a methodology crosses professional and academic boundaries, by "explor[ing] the concrete process of designing exhibitions as a mode of thinking, theorizing, researching, experimenting, and argumentation."[798] Building on Noam Lupu's argument (related to counter-memorials) that the public reception (of such memorials) is "vital to their successful social implementation," I imagine the setting as a scene of social and political action rather than as a static form of communication.[799]

My curatorial dream aims to create a different approach to narrate the story of the Allach camp, and deliberately break with established local, regional and national forms of education and commemoration. My curatorial dream will not provide one solid narrative, but instead invite the general public to engage in moments of memory, silences and fragments of narratives, to encourage participants to reflect on the how and why of official historical narratives, by whom and to who they are told, and their own role in the perpetuation of historical myths. My curatorial dream seeks to challenge established professional and institutional hierarchies and boundaries, while at the same time, it is also intended to create bridges. Butler and Lehrer have pointed out that the blending of pedagogical and curatorial concerns in museums is not as frequently realized, and that curatorial dreaming "can offer curators and museum workers fresh

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[798] Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams*, 6.
[799] Lupu, "Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined,"132.

resources."[800] With my curatorial dream, I intent to acknowledge the significance and role of invested memory activists in the wider context of Holocaust commemoration and research, while I also recognize the importance and socio-political role of established and respected memorial sites, such as Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau, whose professional and dedicated work has contributed to today's global awareness of the Holocaust.

On a related note, I also seek to create a bridge between the often-siloed work of the academia and the general public. While the work of historians enters the public realm through publications or in the form of an exhibition, it oftentimes only reaches those individuals who are already interested in a specific topic, rather than the wider public. In this context, I am particularly drawn to Demnig's *Stolpersteine*, in that they create what Young refers to as an "ongoing exchange between people and [their] historical markers."[801] Kirsten Harjes suggests, that it is the quite literal embeddedness of the stones in everyday settings, which cause people to 'stumble' upon them, and thereby become "involved in individualized commemorative acts without being prepared for it."[802] It is precisely the

> "lack of preparation and anticipation [which] strongly contrasts with the concept of purposefully visiting a memorial, and highlights the project's aim of provoking alternative or […] 'authentic' forms of memory, 'understood as an individual spontaneous act that comes about in some sort of unconventional manner. In this sense, an authentic act of memory is also a *democratic act of memory*, because it originates from individual citizens rather than being directed by state institutions." [my italics][803]

3. My curatorial dream: *Lacuna*[804]

My curatorial dream *Lacuna* will be an assemblage of a large number of life-size plexi-glass silhouettes of men, women and children,[805] which will be placed outside of the BMW museum and the company's headquarter, as well as at the site of the former OT Lager Karlsfeld, the former subcamp Allach, the site of the BMW bunker, along the road leading from Munich to Dachau, at the Dachau memorial site, along the routes of the death marches on which prisoners of the Allach camp were sent, at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and communities of the prisoners' origin in Eastern Europe.

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[800] Butler and Lehrer, *Curatorial Dreams*, 9.
[801] Young, "The counter-monument," 296, cited in Miriam Volmert, "Landscape, Boundaries, and the Limits of Representation: The Stolpersteine as a Commemorative Space," *Scandinavian Jewish Studies*, Vol. 28, Iss. 1 (2017) 4-21, 7.
[802] Kirsten Harjes, "Stumbling stones: Holocaust memorials, national identity, and democratic inclusion in Berlin," *German Politics and Society*, Vol. 23, Iss. 1 (2005): 138–51, 145, cited in Volmert, "Landscape, Boundaries, and the Limits of Representation, 8.
[803] Volmert, "Landscape, Boundaries, and the Limits of Representation, 8.
[804] Lacuna refers to an unfilled space, a gap, or a missing portion.
[805] For more information see: The project *There-But-Not-There* which, as part of the British Legion's First World War centenary commemorations, constitutes a series of wooden or metal near-life-size silhouettes of soldiers, nurses, sailors etc. The installation *There-But-Not-There* was created by artist and photographer Marti Barraud in a small local church in England in 2016 in commemoration of those who lost their ives in the First World War. In order to honor local men who had died in the conflict, Barraud placed 51 seated plexi-glass silhouettes in the church's pews. Two years later, the project turned into a national campaign, and inspitred nation-wide installations of the silhouettes to highlight the absences of these men in villages and towns across the country, and to mark the anniversary of Armistice Day. The Commonwealth War Graves Foundation partnered with *There-But-Not-There* and created a much larger project and fundraising campaign. Life-size silhouettes made out of aluminum, steel or plexi-glass, as well as limited-edition table-top figures were purchased by individuals and groups, and within one week, sales amounted to over £1.3 million. The profits from the sale go toward charities who support veterans, including the War Graves Foundation. In addition, the proceeds also support educational programs and resources relating to the First World War.

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Figure 37

The number of silhouettes will be determined by historical research, which will establish the exact number of individuals: it will begin with the precise number of Jewish prisoners of the Allach subcamp complex (men, women and children), then expand to include Eastern European PoWs and civilians who were at some point housed at the Allach camp. The project will be ongoing and is intended to expand over time to include other groups of prisoners from Western and Northern European countries. Each silhouette will be available for purchase by a sponsor for a reasonable price.[808] The profits of the purchase will go toward a charitable organization who provides support for survivors and their descendants, as well as research and education on forced labour in Nazi Germany.[809]

The silhouettes are mounted on small platforms in which the name of the former forced labourer will be engraved. Each silhouette will have an attached QR code, which, when scanned, will provide information about each specific prisoner. Such information, depending on the availability of sources, can be more substantial, but in many cases, no information aside from the name and prisoner number will exist. In such cases, this will be clearly stated. In addition, one side of the silhouettes will be coated in a mirror-like material which will reflect the viewer as they stand in front of the figurines. In those cases, in which archival photographs of the individual prisoners can be found, the image of their face will be printed onto the plexi-glass. A larger number of silhouettes will be placed outside the BMW museum and headquarter to signify the relationship between the corporation and this dark history, while smaller numbers will be placed in other sides. In addition to the QR codes on the individual silhouettes, which will provide information on specific former forced labourer, an additional link will be provided, where more information about the former subcamp complex Allach will be provided. Yet, the specific placement of silhouettes at the BMW museum, at the Dachau memorial site, at the Auschwitz-Birkenau

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[806] "There But Not There," *Walking with the Wounded*, February 28, 2018 https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/Home/News/96 Accessed March 15, 2020.

[807] *CTV*, "Why ghostly silhouettes of soldiers are popping up across Britain," March 13, 2018 https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/why-ghostly-silhouettes-of-soldiers-are-popping-up-across-the-u-k-1.3841987 Accessed March 15, 2020.

[808] For instance, the table-top size plexi-glass silhouette of a Tommy can be purchased for $42 CA, while an almost life-size aluminum silhouette can be purchased for $211 CA). See *Royal British Legion Industries* website https://rbli.shop/collections/all Accessed May 21, 2020.

[809] The idea for my curatorial dream is informed and inspired by the works of other curators and artists: see for example, Stolpersteine; Chantal Gibson's piece *Souveniers;* Shimon Attie's the *Writing on the Wall* project; and the Mi Polin *Mezuzah From This Home* project in Poland by Helena Czernek and Alexander Prugar.

memorial site, and in communities, invite an engagement with the topic by the organization, institution, or local residents, in that they may choose to provide additional information related to this history, which could, for example, take the shape of a small, dedicated exhibition.

The installation will not have a front; instead, the silhouettes can face in different directions. Sufficient space between the silhouettes will be provided for visitors to walk or to maneuver strollers or wheelchairs to allow access to the QR code, or to read the victim's name. The very design and layout of the installation is intended to acknowledge that the public is heterogenous, and that individuals will have different responses to and will interact differently with this difficult history. The decentralized design of the installation – both in terms of its boundary-crossing layout as well as in the organization of the silhouettes outside of the BMW museum – seeks to destabilize conventional assumptions and expectations about ways to interact with history and memorials. Contextual information will be accessible online via the QR codes, but no information boards will be provided at the installation, in order to further break from the traditional layout of exhibitions, which often require visitors to engage in prolonged readings of at times heavy texts. By creating an open installation consisting of clusters of silhouettes, the public will have the opportunity to walk around, and engage with the installation intellectually as well as physically.

4. Installation strategies

My curatorial dream seeks to make visible silences and absences, as well as make this past relevant in the present. The memory of the Allach subcamp complex in general, and group of prisoners specifically, have been obscured over the post-war decades. Organized efforts toward commemoration of the victims were largely made by former forced labourers from Western European countries, such as France or the Netherlands. Survivor associations were often organized around nationality, which, in turn, at times was reflected in commemorative efforts at the sites. For example, the commemoration at former camps, such as Dachau, in West Germany were often dominated by Christianity.[810] And while the suffering of Jews was commemorated in some sites, Niven et al point to the conservable delay between the establishment of Christian and Jewish memorials. At the same time, although European Jews were persecuted precisely because of their ancestry and not their nationality, Jewish victims were not necessarily mentioned as a specific category of victims but fell into the wider categories of 'victims of Nazism,' such as at the memorial installed by the British Military Government, with the inscription:

> "This is the site of the infamous Belsen concentration camp, liberated by the British on 15th April 1945. 10,000 unburied dead were found here, another 13,000 have since died. All of them victims of the German New Order in Europe and an example of Nazi Kultur."[811]

Of the diverse prisoner groups at the Allach subcamp complex, is has been specific groups whose memory has remained absent in current memorial discourses, namely Jewish forced labourers, female Jewish prisoners and a number of children who were imprisoned at the camp, and Soviet PoWs and civilian.

My curatorial dream seeks to overturn the hierarchies which existed during the time of the camp's operation as well as during the post-war decades, and the first silhouettes will therefore

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[810] Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past,* 15.
[811] Dan Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and Its Aftermath* (Yale University Press, 2015), 104.

by dedicated specifically to these groups of prisoners. Some, such as the Jewish women and children, who were at times incarcerated it the *OT Lager* Karlsfeld, appear only as a category of Jewish prisoners, but without further details. My curatorial dream seeks to give shape to the existence of these individuals, to allude to the absence of knowledge we have about their experiences based on the lack of records and testimony, and to raise questions about the continuity of systems and events which contribute to the lack of representation of specific groups.

As part of my curatorial dream, historical research specifically dedicated to the Jewish as well as to the Soviet forced labourers and prisoners at the Allach camp will be undertaken in various archives, with the intent to provide biographical details about individual persons, by, for example, linking transportation records with camp records. It is possible that no information can be obtained about specific prisoners. All related information or, alternatively, a statement about the lack of obtainable information will be linked with a unique QR code which is fixed on each and every silhouette. In addition to biographical information, additional links will be provided through QR codes on the silhouettes as they relate to the histories of each prisoner; for example, if a prisoner came from a community in Hungary via Auschwitz-Birkenau to the Allach site, links will be provided to the website of the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial site as well as information about the specific community. The limited amount of biographical information or the absence of any information with regard to individual prisoners will highlight the material, mnemonic and archival absences and silences, which in itself underlines the degree of extermination suffered by individual prisoners, as well as the destruction of entire communities.

If photographs of individual prisoners can be obtained over the course of the historical research, these images will be super-imposed onto the facial portion of one side of the silhouettes, thereby giving additional shape to an individual's life and experiences. The absence of such images further emphasizes the lack of traces left by this individual. If any post-mortem information can be obtained about individual persons – such as, for example, how they perished, where they have been buried, or the findings of the forensic anthropological examinations in the context of the archaeological excavations at the Ludwigsfeld – this will also be accessible via the QR code.

One side of the silhouettes will be coated with a mirror-like substance, thereby inviting viewers to create a visible connection between themselves and individual prisoners. At the same time, seeing their own reflection among the silhouettes may invite visitors to reflect on the humanity of these individuals, and potentially to make an imaginary connection between their own lives in the presence, and the lives of those who had to live through these historical events.

My curatorial dream outside of the BMW museum and headquarters as well as in other public spaces and memorial sites is intended to have the public 'stumble' upon it. While visitors to the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau and the *NS-Dokumentationszentrum*, for example, will likely expect to be exposed to difficult histories, to potentially experience emotional responses, and to learn more about the Third Reich, visitors to the BMW museum come with a different mindset, seeking entertainment and fun, but most likely not to seek out information on complex historical issues. By confronting the public with an unexpected setting (the silhouettes) and a largely unknown, difficult history (the Allach subcamp), I hope to generate curiosity, and a willingness to engage with the installation, thereby creating 'democratic acts of memory.' I hope that this unexpected experience may generate more in-depth interest in the site and its history, as well as in the relationship between BMW (or German companies in general) and forced labour during the Third Reich.

Memorial sites dedicated to the history of the Third Reich and to the memory of the

victims function as 'heterotopias.'[812] A heterotopia is separated from the mundane by a transitional zone, and may serve as a place for rituals which further emphasize the distinction between the 'outside' and the 'inside.'[813] The heterotopia of the memorial site or a documentation centre allows visitors to cross spatio-temporal boundaries, and connect with the 'there and then' in the 'here and now' – to not only connect with the past in a historical setting, but instead to also enter a realm of experiences and events which are remote to the vast majority of visitors. Because visitors enter a specific space which differs in its role and function from generic public spaces, their experience inside this space can also be disconnected from their daily lives. My curatorial dream is intended to remove the separation between the historical place and daily life, and instead place the history into the mundane space, thereby not allowing for a separation of a difficult history from the present, but instead encouraging a reflection on the proximity of the Holocaust, and the continuity of systems of power and authority.

Building further on this theory, I seek to challenge the established institutionalized commemoration of the Allach site, as it is currently practiced by memory institutions in Munich, specifically the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau as well as the *NS-Dokumentationszentrum*, as well as the representation of the site and the victims in the BMW museum. I propose, that by situating the memory of the Allach site in dedicated institutions, the narrative is being 'placed' into a specific context where it 'belongs,' thereby effectively removing the memory of the Holocaust from the daily lives of the general public and limiting it to sites specifically dedicated to the provide education and to commemorate the victims of the Nazis. This setting may also serve to create the impression among visitors who may have basic knowledge about the Third Reich, that the Holocaust, only happened in the camps, and that the rest of German society was untouched by it. Yet, forced labourers, including Jewish forced labourers as well as Soviet PoWs were everywhere, and it was precisely the acceptance and acquiescence of the German people which allowed such injustices to occur.

The 'containment' and 'management' of the memory of the concentration camps and the Holocaust in dedicated sites and by professional experts clearly ascribes responsibilities and indicates those who are authorized to tell the narrative. Precisely because the BMW museum is a corporate museum dedicated to the company's history and its products within which it has dedicated a small area of its exhibition to the history of the Allach site, the museum operates outside the usual standards which are required, set, and adhered to by museums and sites which are dedicated to the difficult history of the victims of the Third Reich. The corporation BMW is under no obligation to represent this aspect of its past, nor is it held to the same stringent standards as other organizations.

5. Difficult heritage in public places

By placing the silhouettes in public spaces, such as outside of the BMW museum, or in communities, the memory of the Allach site and the former forced labourers are being made visible to the general public outside of the dedicated space of the memorial sites. They are placed

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[812] 'Heterotopia' translates to 'other place', or a "place out of space and time," and entering it enables individuals to disconnect from their daily mundane lives, and to enter a space in which incompatible historical events and places can coexist. Robert Topinka, "Foucault, Borges, Heterotopia: Producing Knowledge in Other Spaces,"*Foucault Studies*, Vol. 9 (2010): 54-70; Stéphanie Toussaint and Alain Decrop "The Pére-Lachaise Cemetery: Between dark tourism and heterotopic consumption," in *Dark tourism and place identity: managing and interpreting dark places*, ed. Leanne White and Elspeth Frew (Routledge, New York, 2013), 15.

[813] Touissant and Decrop, "The Pere-Lachaise Cemetery," 15 – 16.

outside of the museum specifically because the forced labourers are not part of the company nor its official corporate history but had been and continue to be separate. While closely linked to the company BMW, the former prisoners' experiences and memory cannot simply be incorporated into its corporate history as a historical but now irrelevant past, but because of the magnitude of suffering and mortality it necessitates a dedicated space. Through their notable placement as well as due to their relatively large numbers, the silhouettes will attract the attention and curiosity of passers-by. By positioning them as an assemblage outside of the BMW museum and the corporation's headquarter, a connection is established between these individuals and the corporation who exploited them. The mass will symbolically demonstrate the sheer number of persons who had been exploited by – and may have lost their lives in service of – the corporation. The contemporary wealth of the company, visible and materialized in its iconic buildings, looms over and provides a sharp contrast to the comparatively small shapes, thereby resembling the distribution of power between the individual prisoners as well as the corporation. On the same note, by establishing a connection between the functions and operations of the company during the Third Reich and the global powerful car manufacturer today, the financial continuity and increasing success of the corporation is highlighted, thereby drawing attention to the capital gained by the company through the exploitation of forced labourers as well as the speedy recovery of the company after the Second World War. The memory of the forced labourers is thus set apart from the official celebratory corporate narrative while at the same time, the connection between the company and the workers is clearly established.

The placement of the silhouettes outside and in front of the BMW headquarter is also intended to draw attention to the role of German companies during the Third Reich on a larger scale. While in recent years, a number of German corporations, such as Volkswagen, Audi, and BMW have publicly acknowledged if not apologized for their exploitation of forced labourers during the Nazi era, the long-held notion that forced labour was 'not as bad as the camps' continues to distort historical facts. For instance, in 2019 the heiress to German biscuit business Leibniz (founded by her great-grandfather Hermann Bahlsen) emphasized that the company "did nothing wrong" and treated its forced labourers well.[814]

While awareness of the exploitation of forced labourers has certainly increased over the past three decades, largely as a result of academic research, the sheer extent of the system and the circumstances under which many forced labourers were brought to Germany, their work and living conditions, continue to be underestimated, or represented in an overly positive light. At the same time, the actual responsibility of German companies, many of which participated eagerly in the exploitation of forced labourers, is at times obscured by either referencing the common use of forced workers by all German companies or by ascribing responsibility to the Nazi leadership. The magnificent success of West-German companies during the *Wirtschaftswunder* served to create further distance to the past, and instead focus on further future successes. By framing the Nazi era and the subsequent occupation by the Allied forces as a challenge which they company successfully overcame and in spite of which it succeeded, the active participation of German corporations in the Nazi economy as well as the economic benefits they derived from the usage of forced labourers is obscured. My curatorial dream seeks to challenge the notion of benevolent German corporations which were forced against their will to use forced labourers, but ultimately

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[814] *The Local*, "Outrage after German biscuit heiress WWII forced labour claim," May 14, 2019, https://www.thelocal.de/20190514/outrage-over-german-biscuit-heiresss-forced-labour-claim Accessed May 2, 2020.

treated their workers well, and instead provide an opportunity to consider the circumstances under which forced labourers had to work and live, and in many instances also died.

6. The 'ideal' engagement with the installation

The ideal visitor experience of the installation *Lacuna* outside the BMW museum, at the Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial sites, and in various public places, will be a curious, interested engagement with the silhouettes, which stand symbolically and materially for the lives and experiences of former forced labourers. I imagine that a visitor may 'stumble' upon the silhouettes, for example, as they visit the BMW museum or the Olympic park and may step closer to examine the installation. They may notice that some of the silhouettes have 'faces,' that is archival photographs, and that the silhouettes have different shapes: men, women and children. As they notice the QR code installed on each silhouette, they may access the online information about different individuals, and find biographical details about specific persons, or learn that no information could be obtained. As they also access additional information provided on the former Allach subcamp complex and the role of BMW during the Third Reich, they may become more interested in the topic. If a group of visitors arrives at the installation, they may explore the silhouettes individually, and draw each other's attention to specific points of interest. In contrast to the traditional memorial, which can perhaps be absorbed in one glance, the installation is intended to invite visitors to spend time and walk around, thereby seeking out additional information. The installation also provides other opportunities for engagement; for example, organization or institution, such as the BMW museum, the Dachau *Gedenkstaette* or the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial museum, may choose to set up a more in-depth exhibition or provide additional information in the form of publications.

If visitors are local, they may learn about a history within their own community of which they have been unaware. As they may see other silhouettes in public places, they may begin to contemplate the sheer extent of forced labour during the Third Reich, the presence of these workers everywhere, and the proximity of the Holocaust to their own community. The 'ideal' visitor will be interested in their own family's experience with forced labourers and the decades-long silence about the issue of forced labour in post-war Germany.

The transnational character of the installation will serve to draw attention to specific aspects of the Third Reich in local, regional, national and international contexts. McFarlane's notion of 'translocal assemblage' offers itself as an intriguing theoretical approach to conceptualize the function of *Lacuna* across boundaries. Translocal assemblage provides a conceptual tool to examine and illustrate expansive, fluid, relational and highly complex textures of associations and relevancies across boundaries, including national boundaries, while signifying the importance of the local.[815] The absence of physical traces in a specific historic site may contribute to the perception that "nothing remains," but the concept translocal assemblage allows to explore the considerable depth of a web of connections in which such sites are situated. Such connections exist between the historical site and the present in that the site and its related events continue to have meaning for diverse individuals and groups.

Lacuna is intended to function as a translocal assemblage, in that it is conceptualized

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[815] Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things;* Colin McFarlane, "Translocal Assemblages: Space, Power and Social Movements" *Geoforum*, Vol. 40, Iss. 4 (2009): 561-567.

around and makes visible spatio-temporal connections. While the centre of the installation is situated in the local context of the historical site (Munich), it is nevertheless decentralized memorial in that it is distributed across multiple local sites, thereby illustrating the local network of historic sites and associations, which were closely linked to the Allach subcamp complex. Additionally, the expansion of the installation across national borders lends a translocal character to the memorial, in that the site of the Allach subcamp is linked with other sites across Europe, such as other camps from or to which former prisoners were deported, as well as their places of origin. As visitors of installations in other locations will encounter and engage with the silhouettes, they will learn about the history of the Allach subcamp complex, and its connection to their site.

This decentralized, translocal and transnational character of the installation is intended to draw attention to the expanse of the Holocaust, and its presence across Europe. While some of the former camps have assumed the status of icons and have become tourist destinations, the Holocaust was not limited to the camps. By not restricting the installation to memorial sites and museums, I hope to challenge the myth of the camps as the actual sites of the crimes, and instead contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the prevalence of the Holocaust within Germany, and within the local.

7. Potential limitations and challenges to consider

The implementation of *Lacuna* will require logistical and bureaucratic collaboration on multiple levels. For each individual site – the area outside of the BMW museum, the Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial sites, public spaces, such as the Karlsfeld train station, specific areas in the Ludwigsfeld, along the road leading from the Ludwigsfeld to Dachau, etc. – responsibility and ownership of the specific location will need to be established, and permission gained to create the installation. It is possible, that in some instances, local authorities, leadership, or stakeholders may disagree with the installation altogether; for example, Christian Ude, Munich's former mayor, as well as Dr. Charlotte Knobloch, former president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and vice president of the European Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress, spoke out against the Stolpersteine. Ude expressed concern that pedestrians stepping onto the stones would be disrespectful to the victims, while Dr. Knobloch preferred a centralized memorial, which was eventually created through the engraving of the names of Jewish victims on a tablet at the Munich central synagogue.[816]

Numerous German memorials dedicated to the commemoration of the Holocaust have been subject to vandalism, graffiti and theft: *Stolpersteine* have been stolen, Sol Lewitt's *Black Form* in Münster was defaced by graffiti and political slogans, while the Gerz's project *Monument against Fascism* in Harburg was soon covered in scribbled names, stars of David, and even swastikas. While the artists suggested to give "that phenomenon free reign," to "allow the monument to document the social temperament in that way," local citizens soon began to condemn the monument.[817] While pointing out that it is unclear what disturbed critics most, he argues that the monument "[a]s a social mirror, [it] becomes doubly troubling in that it reminds

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[816] Juliane Reil, *Erinnern und Gedenken im Umgang mit dem Holocaust: Entwurf einer historischen Gedaechtnistheorie,* (Transcript Verlag, 2018); Kyle James, "Munich decides against 'Stumbling Stone' Holocaust Memorials," June 18, 2004, *Deutsche Welle*, https://www.dw.com/en/munich-decides-against-stumbling-stone-holocaust-memorials/a-1240170 Accessed March 15, 2020.

[817] Young, *Texture of Memory*, 35.

the community of what happened then and, even worse, how they respond to the memory of this past," or, as a local newspaper put it: "The filth brings us closer to the truth than would any list of well-meaning signatures. The inscriptions, a conglomerate of approval, hatred, anger and stupidity, are like a fingerprint of our city applied to the column."[818] Yet, specific circumstances may potentially further amplify resentment or rejection by the public, or specific groups or individuals: for instance, the Harburg monument was an official commission, and was perceived by locals from the start as a "waste of money," and, as Lupu as pointed out, as well as to traditional discourses of the experience of fascism.[819] Lupu thereby illustrates the distinction between the potential of public controversy as a means to engage masses, while general resentment debilitates the intended discourse.[820]

Peter Eisenmann believed that defacements of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe would help "illuminate society's diversities of opinion and the continuing dangers of fascism."[821] Quentin Stevens' study on visitor behaviour at this memorial highlights some of the factors which may contribute to how visitors interact with a memorial: he points out that

> "[L]arge, distinctive objects placed in the public realm are likely to attract a broad spectrum of interest and uses: this is particularly true for objects such as artworks and memorials which do not have obvious, recurrent, practical uses, or protective owners."[822]

The very layout of a memorial, such as the open space and architectural structure of the Berlin memorial, might invite conflict between ideas and expectations about appropriate behaviour. In addition, the absence of symbolism and rituals may further call into question the status and definition of the memorial.[823]

A crucial aspect of my curatorial dream is that it does not intent to dictate how the public can engage with it, and, naturally, a public installation which references a difficult history will inspire diverse emotional responses. The purpose of damage or graffiti to memorials cannot necessarily always be clearly established – for instance, do they signify a rejection of the theme of the installation or are they are more generalized expression? My approach to vandalism will be to allow graffiti and damage to the installation to remain, as the intent of the installation is to engage the public. The vandalism to the installation provides an additional layer of meaning, in that it illustrates some of the emotional responses to this difficult past.

The location of the installation, such as outside of the BMW museum and headquarter, along a roadside, or inside the perimeter of the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau or the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial and museum, will have direct impact on the likelihood of vandalism. Naturally, installations within the perimeter of secure institutions are likely to remain intact, whereas installations in open public spaces and isolated areas, such as in the Ludwigsfeld, in local communities in Eastern Europe, at the Karlsfeld trainstation, are more vulnerable.

The main concern with allowing the vandalism of the installation to remain is, of course, the response of the corporation BMW, the public and institutions. Since the installation will be located in front of the BMW museum and the headquarter building at a busy intersection, a

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[818] Young, "The Counter-Monument," 283.
[819] Lupu, "Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined," 140.
[820] *Ibid*., 141.
[821] Quentin Stevens, "Visitor Responses at Berlin's Holocaust Memorial: Contrary to Conventions, Expectations, and Rules," *Public Art Dialogue*, Vol. 2, Iss. 1 (March 2012): 34-59, 51.
[822] *Ibid*.. 56.
[823] *Ibid*.

graffiti-covered installation would likely not be considered desirable, as it would at the very least to be perceived to be an unattractive blemish, or to potentially compromise the sleek and modern appearance of the BMW quarter.

From my perspective, this dark history is indeed a mark on BMW's past, which does not quite fit with the socially responsible image the corporation nurtures. Likewise, the image of the city of Munich as a 'metropolis with heart' is also at odds with its difficult heritage. From this perspective, vandalism to the installation could further amplify the disturbing nature of this inconvenient history. The social, organizational, institutional and corporate response to the installation is in itself part of an engagement with this difficult history, and the audience's reception and interpretation are part of the intended effect of introducing this dark past into the public sphere. While it is possible that the community or corporation may request the removal of a vandalized or defaced installation, the events and processes are part of this dynamic memory process. The physical removal may effectively eliminate this memory from the public sphere, a process has been initiated where the public has taken notice of this dark past and expressed specific sentiments. While these expressions may not represent that perceptions of every local citizen, they nevertheless exist, and, as I suggest, specifically in the current socio-political climate in Germany, must be considered.

My curatorial dream *Lacuna* seeks to address and provide a creative approach to the critical analysis of the memory discourses of the former subcamp complex Allach in Munich, which I have provided in the first part of this dissertation. I propose that the strength of my curatorial dream lies in the interdisciplinary facets of my research, which brought together historical, anthropological, and museal approaches. Existing information on the former Allach camp are largely rooted in historical research and established exhibition practices, whereby the former informs the latter. While these practices seek to establish facts and provide information about historical events, they do not engage with the societal struggles over the commemoration of the Holocaust, which continue into the present, nor do they critically examine how historical narratives are established. In my analysis, the continuities of silences, the struggle over the 'right' way to tell a historical narrative, and the role of political and economic interests, are also a part of the site's discourse, and effectively demonstrate the unsettling, disturbing and unruly effect of difficult heritage.

Difficult heritage is 'difficult' precisely because it is inconvenient, uncomfortable, and highlights aspects of the past and present which are not flattering. The memory and history of the former subcamp complex Allach fall outside of what Edward Linenthal calls "comfortable horrible" [824] Holocaust memory, in that they are a part of the disturbing, forgotten remnants that haunt the German urban, suburban and rural landscape. Difficult heritage, specifically the representation and interpretation of atrocity, is particularly sensitive and can have deeply unsettling consequences.[825] While according to Laqueur "the dead matter because they make social worlds,"[826] the role of mass graves and dead bodies in the context of heritage has only relatively recently been considered.[827] The "Horizon 2020" project "Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion

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[824] Linenthal, *Preserving Memory*.
[825] Tunbridge and Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage*; Logan and Reeves, *Places of Pain and Shame*; Smith, *Uses of Heritage*; Macdonald, *Unsettling memories*.
[826] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead,* 1.
827 Zoe Crossland, "Evidential Regimes of Forensic Archaeology," *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 42 (2013): 121-137; Francisco Ferrándiz, "Exhuming the defeated: Civil War mass graves in 21st-century Spain." *American Ethnologist* Vol. 40, Iss.

in Transnational Europe (UNREST)" has proposed the definition of mass graves as "unsettling heritage."[828] My curatorial dream seeks to make visible the "unsettling heritage" of the former forced labourers who perished as a result of their exploitation through the corporation BMW by providing information on the causes of death (if known) and forensic findings of the recent findings. While the deaths of labourers at the BMW plant and in the Allach subcamp complex are noted in historical research, they are treated as a fact. Yet, the findings of human remains on the site of the former camp illustrate that the corpse is a "site and surface of essential but otherwise obscured social truths."[829] By situating the experiences, life and perhaps death of each former forced labourer in the centre of my curatorial dream, I hope to draw attention to the humanity of these individuals.

In the context of my dissertation, my curatorial dream is an imaginary exploration, which allows me to engage with difficult heritage in a constructive and novel ways. I am considering the potential of this installation to take shape as an actual project. In order to take be carried out as an installation, this project would likely need to be limited in scope to some degree, as the expanse of the installation in multiple sites, both locally and across borders, might be difficult to achieve, both in terms of costs and logistical aspects. However, the project could initially start with an installation outside of the BMW museum, at the Ludwigsfeld and at the *Gedenkstaette* Dachau, if permission would be granted. While the history of the former subcamp complex Allach will likely be represented by the *Gedenkstaette,* and potentially by other organizations or institutions in Munich, my installation would not compete with those projects due to its interdisciplinary approach, but rather provide a fresh approach and a different interpretation.

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1 (2013): 38-54; Ferrándiz and Robben, *The Anthropology of Exhumations*; Roger Luckhurst, "Digging Up Memories: Forensic Archaeology, Cultural Trauma and the Contemporary Mass Grave," in *Memorialisation* ed. Coelsch-Foisner (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University, 2015); Laura Major, "Unearthing, untangling and rearticulating genocide corpses in Rwanda," *Critical African Studies*, Vol. 7, Iss. 2 (2015): 164 – 181; Kelsey Perreault, "Heritage Ethics and Human Rights of the Dead." *Genealogy* Vol. 2, Iss. 3 (2018) http://www.mdpi.com/2313-5778/2/3/22 Accessed August 15, 2018; Antonius Robben, *A Companion to the Anthropology of Death* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

[828] UNREST*: Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Transnational Europe.*

[829] Eric Klinenberg, "Bodies that Don't Matter: Death and Dereliction in Chicago." in *Commodifying Bodies* ed. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loic Wacquant (Sage, 2003), 121.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation explores the re-emerging and mnemonic histories and memories of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach near Munich, thereby serving as a case study that examines the creation of historical narratives, dynamics of memory discourses, stakeholder initiatives and responses, and the struggle over the interpretation and representation of the difficult heritage forced labour in the broader context of Germany's national process of *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung.* In the discussion of my research, I focus on three specific themes through which I examine the dynamics of local, regional, national and international memory discourses: first, taking a body-centric approach based on the 'forensic turn,' my research illustrates that specific aspects of the Nazi past – such as the remains of victims of the Nazi era - remain deeply uncomfortable in the German context, thereby calling into question the nation's much praised approach to overcome its difficult past. Second, by focusing specifically on the responses to, perceptions of, and engagement with the human remains discovered at the site by various key stakeholders, I highlight the disruptive and unsettling agency of the dead body and illustrate how this specifically troubling past is managed through removal from the original site and replacement into an 'appropriate' environment, where serves as a positive contribution to Germany's Holocaust memory discourses. Third, by examining how the difficult heritage forced labour is represented in the BMW corporate museum in Munich, I engage with two specific aspects of memory discourses: first, I explore how German corporations who exploited forced labourers during the Third Reich slowly began to engage with this topic, including the representation of this difficult heritage in respective corporate museums, whereby this dark past is presented as a positive value – and therefore as an asset – of the company; second, I investigate how the history of the former forced labour camp Allach is represented in the BMW museum, focusing specifically on the use of perpetrator photography and the creation of a historical narrative, which seeks to incorporate this difficult past into its celebration of progress and success.

I approach my research with range of interdisciplinary analytical tools, which allows me to examine and illustrate the many diverse facets which inform the site and its related mnemonic and material discourses: drawing from the fields of history, cultural anthropology, memory studies, heritage studies, material culture studies and museum studies, I expand existing bodies of knowledge; at the same time, by combining specific disciplinary approaches – for example, building on the disciplines museum studies and death studies, I explore the representation of the human skeletal remains discovered at the site in the new exhibition *Zeitspuren* at the Dachau memorial site to explore perceptions of the dead body of Holocaust victims in the contemporary German context, while, at the same time, I investigate the role of this display in the context of the exhibit. In addition to this interdisciplinary approach, I draw from and build on Rothberg's concept of the "implicated subject" to extend my discussion of the specific memory discourses of the site of the former forced labour camp Allach to Germany's Holocaust education and commemoration in broader terms: Rothberg's notion explores the continuities that exist materially and mnemonically between Nazi Germany and the contemporary nation to discuss the role of historical responsibility. Rothberg notes that while contemporary individuals are not victim or perpetrator, they nevertheless

"occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct

> agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes."[830]

On the same note, I consider the implications of my own positionality – for example, as a German-born, non-Jewish, now-Canadian scholar – in the production of my academic research and writing, while – at the same time – I also apply the concept to the role of contemporary German corporations, whose economic wealth and status is directly linked to the exploitation of forced labourers during the Third Reich. Concurrently, Rothberg's concept also serves to highlight the continuities in the perception of and engagement with (or lack thereof) the diverse residents of the historical and contemporary site by the surrounding community and the city of Munich.

I suggest that Germany's national institutionalized commemoration of the Holocaust and its associated collective responsibility has led to the neglect of attention to other forms of discrimination and exclusion in relation to its increasingly diverse demographic. The continuity of colonial and racial ideologies, which have continued to go unquestioned in the post-war decades, and specifically recently re-emerging anti-Semitism, indicate that an important and precarious turning point is occurring, which calls into question existing approaches to Holocaust and political education, and also offers the opportunity to consider broader trends and possibilities. Three specific aspects emerged out of my research, namely: the impact of the 'forensic turn,' the agency of the dead, and different approaches to representing suffering and death; the representation of the difficult heritage forced labour in the context of a corporation's own museal space; and finally, a re-consideration of the potential role of German corporations in the nation's *Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung* and reconciliation.

As I have discussed in chapter 5, the twelve human skeletal remains which were discovered as a result of archaeological excavations in 2017, generated a sequence of processes and decisions by specific stakeholders. These activities relate to what Verdery considers the social and political agency of dead bodies.[831] Specifically in the German context, the role of the human remains left behind by the Nazis played a particularly complex role: not only were German civilians forced to engage with the corpses of the victims, but they were also expected to acquire more democratic tolerance and empathy through this engagement. It is perhaps not surprising, that in response to these 'forced confrontations' Germany assumed a specific way of managing the materiality of genocide through, for example, the creation of specifically dedicated cemeteries or sections within local cemeteries for the victims of the Nazi rule and the consolidation of individual burial sites, such as along roadsides, into such cemeteries, thereby effectively removing the tangible reminders of the genocide from the public sphere and allocating them in an 'appropriate' space. At the same time, however, the dead bodies of the victims continued to haunt the German public in the form of abstract shocking images of piles of corpses in the exhibitions of memorial sites, thereby arguably repeating the 'forced confrontation' of German civilians with the Nazi crimes in 1945. The genocide committed by the Nazis – and ordinary Germans – was so unimaginable, so horrific, and so vast, that the only way the German public could engage with this legacy was by maintaining its abstract and shocking potential. Yet, this approach negated the possibility of younger generations of Germans to find an individual access point to comprehend and engage

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[830] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*, 2.
[831] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*.

with this dark history. To young Germans, such as myself, the dead or starving victims of the Nazi terror were too abstract and horrible to relate to, while the perpetrators were pathological sadists, leaving little room for empathy. The special exhibition *Zeitspuren* in the Dachau memorial site offers a different approach to address death and suffering through a markedly muted display of a drawing of the skeletal remains in situ, together with a handful of small personal items, such as buttons and hooks, as well as with a note of the notably limited information which could be gleaned from the skeletal remains, such as the age and sex of the individual, as well as their injuries. While this display is subdued, it is nevertheless particularly poignant, as it invites visitors to pause in order to gaze at the drawing and the objects, and to read the notes. It is rather the absence of mnemonic or material traces within this display which may cause visitors to consider all which has been lost, and the deeply personal experience of suffering and death of these individuals. Rather than serving as a metaphor for the past or absence, it is precisely the remains' materiality through which a void may become a narrative. Through that process, the anonymous dead therefore become human again, and offering a counter-narrative against forgetting, silence and absence. The display of the dead in the exhibition *Zeitspuren*, thus, offers an opportunity to visitors to engage with events of the otherwise unimaginable extent of the genocide as well as with its legacies. This approach to a new form of representing death and suffering occurs at a point in time when a notable increased interest in the materiality's of violent histories and genocide is developing on a global level, thereby offering an opportunity to consider the potential and limitation of human remains as witnesses and agents.

The self-disclosure of past wrong-doings has become a marker of democracy, and is occurring globally in notable public gestures, for example, through official apologies by heads of countries. It is no longer possible for nation states to deny the responsibility for historical events, such the slave trade, colonialism and residential schools. It is thus perhaps not surprising, that multi-national corporations, if confronted publicly with their difficult heritage, have assumed a similar approach by incorporating information about this dark past in their own corporate museums. Expanding on Heusler's notion of "entrepreneurial wisdom" it can be suggested that as German corporations found themselves increasingly confronted with their roles during the Third Reich, executive decisions were made to proactively engage with this past and thereby to control the information, rather then to be subjected to public pressure - understanding that the public acknowledgement of and apology for mistakes might in fact be considered a positive step. From the perspective of a corporation, with its primary concern for financial gain and sustainability such an approach might even be an effective marketing strategy. Building on the social and cultural capital of museums as institutionalized authorities, corporate museums thereby function as a venue through which the company can present its brand and its philosophy in a particularly positive fashion, while at the same time, they are not exposed to the same scrutiny and critique as, for example, history museums. My research demonstrates that the representation of difficult heritage in the context of corporate museums is a field which so far has been neglected. Specifically in the German context, where countless companies profited from forced labour during the Third Reich, an exploration of displays of difficult heritage within corporate museums can make important contributions to the fields of museum studies, difficult heritage studies and memory studies.

In previous chapters, I have explored the aspects of a corporate museum which make the display of the difficult heritage of forced labour particularly incongruous. Yet, I would like to propose that corporate museums may have specific conditions which could potentially make them particularly significant with respect to difficult heritage. Many museums and memorial

sites face considerable limitations with respect to their overall focus, funding, stakeholders, and structural limitations, for example, space. Corporate museums, on the other hand, have the financial support of the company, which provides them with significantly more resources to develop impactful exhibitions. My curatorial dream allowed me to consider how the limitations and shortcomings which I have identified through my research could potentially be addressed, and the curatorial project which I envision would bridge not only the academia and the broader community, but also provide the opportunity for collaboration. As my curatorial dream would not only connect specific areas in the topography of the city of Munich, which are related to the former forced labour camp Allach, but also re-trace the connections to other locations, such as sites from which prisoners of the Allach site had been deported (for example, Auschwitz-Birkenau) as well as hometowns of these individuals, thereby creating a spatial and mnemonic network. The connection between the former forced labour camp Allach and the extermination of the European Jews which occurred in the *Operation Reinhard* camps in the East. I envision such a project to be a widely collaborative undertaking between the corporation, external experts, which will include researchers and curators, artists, and members of marginalized communities, for example, such as residents of the Ludwigsfeld who may have a direct connection to the history of the site. As this project will require additional research into the identity of former camp prisoners, dedicated research in other locations would be undertaken, and would therefore contribute to the broader field of knowledge about the Holocaust, forced labour, and the former forced labour camp Allach. As this memorial project will be decentralized and be present in diverse areas, such as at the Dachau memorial site, outside of the BMW headquarters, nearby train stations and so on, pedestrians will encounter the silhouettes during their day-to-day lives, thereby inviting curiosity and connecting the 'here-and-now' with the 'there-and-then.' In addition to providing the resources for such a substantial undertaking, I would also recommend that the corporation connect the difficult heritage of forced labour with present-day injustices and inequities through additional projects and programming, thereby not only acknowledging and demonstrating the material and social continuities between the past and the present, but also highlighting the similarities between past and present racial ideologies and prejudices. Through collaborations with concerned communities, thereby inviting their voices and representations rather then speaking for them, corporations may have the potential to become particularly impactful champions of reconciliation.

German commemorative discourses have been critiqued for its top-down approach, which effectively severed Nazi Germany from the contemporary society, by ascribing the responsibility for the genocidal events to a leadership which no longer existed. At the same time, the specific focus on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism in the German context allowed other forms of discrimination to continue to go unchallenged. The approaches of corporations toward their difficult heritage of force labour are, arguably, similar in that they separate the company's identity during the Nazi era from its present-day identity, while at the same time referencing the external circumstances which necessitated their involvement in the production of armament. The conceptual separation between Nazi Germany and its racial ideologies, and contemporary democratic Germany with its dedicated educational and commemorative programs and its increasingly diverse population did not encourage its German-born citizens to contemplate the legacies through which they are connected to the past, and thereby share a collective responsibility. By displaying the difficult heritage of forced labour within the space of the corporation which exploited these workers in the first place, by not explicitly addressing issues

such as perpetrator photography, and by displaying potentially misleading information, corporations who seek to incorporate their dark past into their company narrative run the risk of contributing to the separation between the past and the present. The presentation of this difficult heritage in a setting which is intended to entertain and impress further contributes to the disconnect between the dark past and the present. On the other hand, if a curatorial installation was situated outside of the corporate space, yet, in proximity to it, it would separate the leisure- and entertainment aspects of the corporate museum, and instead draw attention to the imbalances of power and the discrepancy between the suffering of the victims, and the wealth of the company. I would like to close by returning to Solomon's argument that difficult heritage holds the potential to enhance critical historical thinking and education, and that museums specifically can be vehicles for the development of such skills.[832] Similarly, Murawska-Muthesius and Piotrowski emphasize that museums must consider the ongoing changes in the world, including "the problems of social minorities, migrations, and social inequalities" and should "encourage[e] the public to understand the complexity of the present world."[833] While corporate museums will likely always function as attractive advertisement for their respective brand, in their role as educational institutions, they are historically implicated and have a responsibility to contribute to the meaningful education on and commemoration of the Holocaust. This can only occur if the company is willing to engage with this topic as a *contemporary* issue rather than a remote and inaccessible past.

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[832] Solomon, "Museums, education and 'difficult' heritage."
[833] Murawska-Muthesius and Piotrowski, "Introduction," 1-12, 1-2.

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