

“Outline of Development and Current Issues of „Dark Tourism“ in World and in Slovakia”

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Abstract

The proposed contribution is an exploratory and cognitive cross-section of selected problems of dark tourism. It summarizes limitations of dark tourism and its subtypes, especially, thanatourism and cemetery tourism. All these terms have a historical origin that dates back to ancient times. At the end of the 20th century the cult of death got into pop culture. By us published motives and destinations of dark tourism show that:

- 1. dark tourism is a part of cultural tourism,*
- 2. several forms of dark tourism can have deviation motives and those we reject to include into the ethic and moral of defined forms and types of tourism*
- 3. contribution is the starting point for future research projects of dark tourism in our country, due to the fact that it defines its motives, as well as geographical representation in Slovakia*
- 4. contribution locates the potential of cemetery tourism in Eastern Slovakia, in particular military memorials and military cemeteries of World War I and II.*

Keywords: *Dark tourism, thanatourism, cemetery tourism, regions of dark tourism, subtypes of dark tourism, dark tourism and pop culture.*

Paper type: *Scientific study*

1 Input considerations and meritorious framework for work

Tourism is a complex phenomenon that can be examined from many perspectives. More recently the forms and types of tourism have been discussed. Yet this discussion ceased because there is no clear boundary between the forms and types (Čuka, 2011).

The aim of this contribution paper is to define the concept of dark tourism, to explain its formation and development, respectively, to determine the boundaries between dark tourism and other activities associated with visiting the sites of tragedies, disasters, or funerary sites.

Ideological and meritorious contribution structure is based on heuristic analysis of sources, analysis of the motives of tourists to participate in dark tourism and accessible statistical analyses. Based on definitions of tourism, we intend to draw attention to by us drafted definition of Čuka, P 2011: “The temporary stay away from the place of residence in order to restore mental and physical resources of a person, or for the purpose of meeting the mental and physical needs on condition that the stay is not connected to obtaining funds and in accordance with moral and ethical values. “

Within the meaning by us drafted definition, dark tourism can be regarded as visits to places of disasters, tragedies, battlefields, accidents, cemeteries and the like, which are motivated by:

- History cognition
- Cultural cognition
- Geographic exploring of the country as part of homeland cognition

Immoral and unethical incentives which tourism psychology identifies as deviations are explicitly excluded from dark tourism. (Zdembski, Winiarski, 2008) and thus the following motives are excluded:

Sensations associated with tragedies, death and so on,

Meeting the psychological needs of deviants through observation of disaster victims or disaster sites. It follows that the subject of dark tourism are the first three subdivisions of dark tourism.

2 Basic terminology and definition of dark tourism

To our knowledge, mainly the Anglo-Saxon terminology lists a number of terms associated with dark tourism e.g. dark tourism, thanatourism, grief tourism and cemetery tourism, which have been described by a number of foreign authors. Among the most prominent authors, who deal with this issue and publish on it are particularly Lennon, Stone, Foley (1999, 2005, 2006) and others who have been describing it for two decades. Lennon states that terminology of dark tourism is still in the process of formation. The authors Lennon and Foley denominated this phenomenon the dark tourism (1999, 2000). Descriptions and definitions of the phenomenon in different literature by various authors differ. It has been called, for instance, ‘fatal attraction tourism’ (Rojeck, 1993), ‘disaster and conflict tourism’ (Warner,

1999), 'holidays in hell' (O'Rourke, 1988), 'morbid tourism' (Blom, 2000) and 'black-spot tourism' (Rojeck, 1993). However, it seems that in the current literature on tourism, this area is frequently referred to just as "dark tourism", (Lennon and Foley, 2000 in Dubayová, 2011, p.15) “.

The relevant literature, which would deal with dark tourism in more details, has not arisen in Slovak conditions yet. For the purposes of this contribution we will use hierarchically largest concept: dark tourism.

An example of history cognition as a part of dark tourism is also visiting the memorial sites and memorial cemeteries. The emergence of dark tourism cannot be explicitly determined, but from literary sources we know that first trips to the major sacral and burial sites were already known in prehistoric times, respectively, in ancient times (menhir fields in Carnac, Stonehenge, gladiatorial games, etc.). Tourist spots of tragedies may be arias with a large growth potential, but it is not a new phenomenon. Ancient Romans watched gladiatorial games, in the Middle Ages pilgrims travelled hundreds of miles to the graves and places of religious martyrdom, watched battles, executions, burning at the stake, etc.

Public commemorative information signs, guide tourist information, specialized information and tourist guide services are also parts of these sites. Indication that it is a tourist activity is the fact that those sites will levy a fee for admission, some of them also have virtual boxes on internet (<http://www.911memorial.org/>): Ground Zero in New York, National Monument USS Missouri Arizona Pearl Harbour Memorial Hawaii, Arlington National Cemetery Washington. The list of national cemeteries in the USA contains 147 objects (see tab. 1).

3 Geographical extension of dark tourism in the World and in Slovakia

The dark tourism potential in terms of geographical extension is significant. Disasters, traces of wars, military museums, memorials and commemorative cemeteries are spread across the whole ecumene. Of course, in terms of potential visiting rate of dark tourism it is necessary to distinguish:

1. already formed tourism products, such as battle memorials, military cemeteries, chanel houses, museums of wars and criminal acts and the like
2. potential dark tourism destinations, such as zones of tectonic disasters, zones devastated by the tsunami, zones devastated by hurricanes, places of mass tragedies and catastrophes.

3. Particularly attractive are the places of violent death of celebrities such as the death of Princess Diana of Wales - in the Paris tunnel Place l'Alma, James Dean - in Paso Robles, California, Grace Kelly in Monaco, U.S. President JF Kenedy in Dallas, the death of Elvis Presley at Graceland in Memphis, etc. The stories of their lives, circumstances and scenes of their death are mostly mythicised and often controversially documented, since they are worldwide popular personalities with a strong impact on society and their violent death has become a part of pop culture. Examples are films such as JFK of 1991 by Oliver Stone, The Doors - Oliver Stone's film about the life of James Morrison and his untimely death in Paris Hotel de Nice. His grave in Paris Per La Chaise cemetery has become almost pilgrimage place.
4. The actual pilgrimage centres have often a tomb or mausoleum for the main attraction (Jackowski, 1991, 1996). Buried are part of the genius loci and the main attraction. The tomb of St. Peter in the Vatican, the tomb of Saint Nicholas in Bari, mausoleum Taj Mahal in India and others can be assigned to such attractions

Tab. 1 Selected national cemeteries in the U.S.

Title	Location	Federal state
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery	Elwood	Illinois
Alabama National Cemetery	Montevallo	Alabama
Alexandria National Cemetery	Pineville	Louisiana
Alexandria National Cemetery	Alexandria	Virginia
Alton National Cemetery	Alton	Illinois
Andersonville National Cemetery	Andersonville	Georgia
Andrew Johnson National Cemetery	Greeneville	Tennessee
Annapolis National Cemetery	Annapolis	Maryland
Antietam National Cemetery	Sharpsburg	Maryland
Arlington National Cemetery	Arlington	Virginia
Bakersfield National Cemetery	Bakersfield	California
Balls Bluff National Cemetery	Leesburg	Virginia
Baltimore National Cemetery	Baltimore	Maryland
Barrancas National Cemetery	Pensacola	Florida
Bath National Cemetery	Bath	New York
Baton Rouge National Cemetery	Baton Rouge	Louisiana

Source : Wikipedia



Fig. 1 the most extensive menhir field in the world in Carnac originates about 3 to 4.5 thousand years B.C.

Source: Peter Čuka - author photograph

Preferences of tourists vary depending on many factors. Motives and motivation play an important role in selecting the final destination and in the overall orientation of the tourist.

Globally new trends and new tourism products are developing. These can include the so-called dark tourism which is perceived from different perspectives, often even too controversial. On the one hand, it can be considered in some way as morbid but on the other hand, it can represent a potential educational resource for current and future generations. It is important, however, to find the best way to evolve it so it can serve the cultural and educational purposes, and that it is not just another supporting factor for violence and evil (Matušíková, 2009). The popularity of public debate about death and its possible consequences have increased after the world-famous studies of clinical death of Raymond Moody (1977). Popularity of topic has increased even more after the Hollywood blockbuster *Flatliners* 1990. Selected dark tourism destinations in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland and their regional impact are presented on map 1:

As it can be seen on the map, we assigned the former Polish concentration camps, particularly Auschwitz and also objects associated with the Warsaw Uprising (especially child statue defender see Fig. 2) to dark world tourism destinations and these were classified according to the size of visiting rate and popularity. The global destination in the Czech Republic is Prague with its Jozefov, a Jewish cemetery and the Anne Frank House as well as the Terezin concentration camp. Remarkable dark tourism destinations in the Czech Republic are charnel houses in Brno and Melnik.

Dark tourism thus acquired a new justification in conditions of the 20th century. Zdebski, J. and Viniarski, R. (2008) analysed the motives of tourists in details. They lined up all the motives into groups:

- a) tourist motives tied to human instincts
- b) tourist motives tied to people's needs
- c) tourist motives linked to learning
- d) tourist motives related to the development
- e) humanistic tourist motives
- f) tourist motives tied to cognitive theories



Map 1. Selected dark tourism destinations in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland

Source: Own research



Fig 2. Monument to the defenders of Warsaw - a children's memorial

Source: Peter Čuka - author photograph

According to already mentioned kinds of motives the dark tourism could be particularly motivated by cognition (f), learning (c), or the need to maintain the basic solidarity with the wider community and not just with their live members, but also posthumously (e).

Among the motives that are still considered essential, we could include memories, memory, respect, the need for gaining broader information, test of the right feeling on such a place, or even a secret pleasure and often curiosity. The curiosity about disasters motivates people to visit the sites associated with violence and death. Certain kind of potential controversy of dark tourism is stated by Lennon (2007): 'We have always been fascinated by the dark side of human nature and the worst things that people can do. This means that it is centred on the bad things that people do.'

Nevertheless, it is still unclear whether tourism related to death is managed with an attractive offer, highlights the fact that in today's society people regularly consume death and suffering in the form of tourism, and apparently under the guise of education or entertainment. As a consequence, this phenomenon within society is becoming more diverse and more acceptable. In fact, fatality, respectively death and misfortune are a feature of postmodernism in the country (Rojeck, 1993). p.19.

Thanatourism is motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounter with death. It is based on the so-called "thanatology", i.e. the scientific study of death and deathbed visions (cited Moody, R 1977). It clarifies circumstances of a person's death, mourning of the loved ones of deceased and larger social attitudes towards death as a memorial ritual.

Lennon and Foley (1999) defined thanatourism as a type of tourism where participants feel a desire to see and experience the atmosphere of the places associated with death and human suffering. Travelling to these places was also seen as a 'heritage of cruel tourism, dark tourism as well as tourism of black

sites' (Austin, 2002, Lennon and Foley, 1999, 2000). Concept of thanatourism was developed in response to the growing desire of tourists to feel and experience the places where the death, natural disasters and man-made tragedies occurred (Austin, 2002, Lennon and Foley, 1999, 2000, Strange and Kempa, 2003).

Thanatourism is a philosophical variant of post-modern term dark tourism. In other words, the concept of dark tourism involves wider variations of visit rates of sites associated with death, whereas the thanatourism is a narrower concept which is more or less of cognitive nature of such specific sites (Tanaś, S., 2006)

Seaton (1996) identified five forms of thanatourism. These comprise:

1. viewing and experiencing laws of death or tragedy,
2. attending sites where individual death, mass death, disaster of tragedy have occurred,
3. visits to memorials of the deceased,
4. viewing relics, evidence of, or symbols linked to particular tragic events that are in some way connected to death, in locations other than the original sites, and
5. experiencing reenactments of events that in some way involve death.

The term dark tourism was established in 1996, but there has always been dark travelling. Stone (2005) defines dark tourism as a "travelling and visiting places, attractions and exhibitions which are associated with death and suffering, and its main theme is seemingly morbid", which he subsequently corrected to "travelling and visiting places, monuments and exhibitions, whose main theme is showing real or artificially arranged death, suffering and apparent terror". Another definition identifies dark tourism as visitations to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death occurred and that continue to impact our lives (Tarlow in Novelli, 2005).

According to Stone (2005), dark tourism is manifested in various forms and subcategories. These include:

Grief tourism- travelling and visiting places connected with the tragic event.

Disaster tourism- travelling and visiting places associated with natural disasters.

Doomsday Tourism- visiting places 'destroyed' by catastrophes (mostly environmental) that may be or will be responsible for the 'doomsday'.

Poverty Tourism- involves visiting impoverished areas.

Grief tourism also has some subtypes associated with grief, mourning or sorrow. There can be included:

Battlefield tourism – e.g. Waterloo

Cemetery tourism – e.g. P re Lachaise in Paris

Disaster tourism – e.g. Fukushima

Ghost tourism – e.g. Scotland, Romania.

Visiting cultural-historical sites and their parts, where e.g. murders, massacres, and genocide took place in the past can be considered as cultural learning in the context of dark tourism. An example is the historic part of Krakow's Kazimierz, where during World War II a Jewish ghetto was created. History of the ghetto was popularized by Thomas Keanaly book "Schindler's List" and the eponymous movie. Subsequently visits to Krakow and Kazimierz as well as nearby concentration camp Auschwitz multiplied (the eponymous film received an Oscar in 1993 - see Table 2). Potentially important destination for world dark tourism is area of Katyn forest, where the Soviet army launched genocide against the Polish nation and in 1940 executed about 25 thousand people. Also this tragedy has been cinematized by Oscar-winning director Andrzej Wajda in 2007. Furthermore, the government aircraft crashed in 2010 in the Smolensk airport near the Katyn forest, where 95 passengers were killed, including Polish President Lech Kaczynski and his wife.

It follows that the world's most famous and most visited "dark museum" Oswiecim-Auschwitz - Birkenau in Poland shows upward tendency in the recent decade.

The final resting places have other forms and motives of visiting. Their cultural dimension may have the character of recognizing differences in sepulchral architecture (tombstone

Tab. 2 Visit rate in Oswiecim - Auschwitz 2001 - 2011

Year	Number of visitors	Annual change in %
2001	492 500	-
2002	541 800	+ 10,01
2003	578 700	+ 6,81
2004	699 700	+ 20,91
2005	927 000	+ 32,49
2006	989 500	+ 6,74
2007	1 220 000	+ 23,29
2008	1 130 000	- 7,38
2009	1 300 000	+ 15,04
2010	1 380 000	+ 6,15
2011	1 405 000	+ 1,81

Source: Calculated according to Annual Report Oswiecim 2011 in: [www.http://en.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=620&Itemid=49](http://en.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=620&Itemid=49)

architecture). This may differ in the professed religion, but also the geographical differences. S. Tana s (2008) identified motives of cultural visits to cemeteries as follows:

1. burials - celebrities that have historical significance and enjoyed universal respect,
2. position of necropolis - an attractive location and surrounding landscape scenery,
3. the art of sepulchral architecture - curious gravestones,
4. history of necropolis - a unique and appealing history,
5. symbolic and religious value,
6. general atmosphere of the place.

We think that some of the necropolises meet practically all the features of cultural visiting the necropolis and determine the form of cultural dark tourism of place. An example is the Paris Pere Lachaise.

Types of visiting cities of sepulchral tourism also include:

1. Museums of funerals – e.g. in Vienna, Hamburg,
2. The graves of saints – e.g. at Ephesus (John the Apostle's tomb), Rome (St. Peter grave), Tours (St. Martin grave).
3. World Jewish cemeteries - Prague Jozefov, Lodz Jewish Cemetery, Jerusalem
4. Military cemeteries - Collevile Sur Mer, Mamay mound, Slavin, Dukla

High visiting rate of sites of final resting is shown in Table 3:

Tab. 3 Visiting rate of some world cemeteries in 2005

Name of cemetery	Annual visiting rate
Arlington NC Washington	3 000 000
Pere Lachaise Paris	800 000
Prague Jozefov	670 000
Green Wood NY	500 000
Campo Santo Pisa	210 000
St Louis New Orleans	100 000
Abney ParkCemetery London	70 000

Source: Tana s,S, (2008)

According to a website dedicated to the issue of dark tourism www.vacationideas.me among top 10 dark tourism destinations may be included: Dharavi Slum, Mumbai - India, Cu Chi Tunnels, Saigon - Vietnam, Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Phnom Penh - Cambodia, Devil's Island - French Guyana, London Dungeon - United Kingdom, alienation zone of Chernobyl - Ukraine; Auschwitz concentration Camp - Poland; Bridge on the River Kwai - Thailand, Ground Zero, New York City - United States, road tunnel de l'Alma Paris - France.

In Slovakia, there is a tradition of military cemeteries (from the period of both world wars), military monuments, memorials, museums and historic cemeteries and memorials. Some places combine these more attractions with potential of dark tourism, thanatourism or sepulchral tourism. An example of such a link is Slavin in Bratislava. Slavin is a scenic point of Bratislava, it is also the final resting place of more than 6,800 Soviet soldiers killed in World War II monument as well as War Memorial. A similar example is the Dukla Pass in the district of Svidn k. There are 265 graves of Czechoslovak and Soviet

soldiers it is both monument and a museum of combat vehicles, combat aircraft and tanks, which are arranged along the international road E 371 leading from Prešov to Rzeszow in the area Svidník - Vyšný Komárnik. Monuments of the Dukla Pass have the status of national cultural heritage. In Slovakia a number of sites associated with bloody battles of World War II, or massacres of civilians has this status. Examples are - Lime kiln with a monument and museum in the village of Nemecká (900 people executed), the place of executions in the village Kremnička (747 people executed), Kľak (84 executed by the Nazis), Ostrý Grúň (62 executed by the Nazis) and many others.

In Slovakia there is the National Cemetery in Martin. It is a cultural-historical monument, where the most important personalities of Slovak cultural, artistic and public life were buried. Since 1967 the National Cemetery is also a national cultural heritage.

There is a number of historic cemeteries, Roman - Catholic, Protestant and Jewish (693 Jewish cemeteries, according to <http://www.slovak-jewish-heritage.org/slovakia-jewish-cemeteries.html?&L=1>) which are the part of the urban space of all monuments and historical sites, especially of Bratislava, Košice, Prešov, Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Nitra, Banská Štiavnica, Levice etc.

With respect to contemporary sites of tragedies, these have not been established as tourism products or tourist destinations of dark tourism, yet. Anniversaries of these tragedies became medially known, have become part of pop culture and are commemorated via plaques. The following sites also have a dark tourism potential: lakes and recreation centre in Golden Sands, Bratislava - as the site of the plane crash in 1976, crash of helicopter services in Mlynská valley in the Tatra Mountains in 1979, crash of a bus with train near the village Polomka in 2009, but also the crash of a military aircraft near the Košice,

close to Hungarian village Hejce in 2006. The most famous object of pop culture interest in Slovakia is an alleged killer Elizabeth Bathory (1560-1614). This subject was literary processed by Nižnánsky, J (1932) in the novel Lady of Čachtice. In 1980 the animated film titled Bloody Lady was produced by Viktor Kubal. The latest achievement is the epic movie of Juraj Jakubisko titled Bathory (2008). For these reasons, Čachtický castle and town Čachtice are potentially centres of dark tourism. Dracula's castle in the town of Bran (Romania) which is visited by tens of thousands of tourists, can be a model and inspiration for the development of Čachtice,

The issue of identification, classification, localization of military cemeteries of World War I in the district of Svidník and their use for tourism was mapped by Slivková, S. (2011). There are about 40 cemeteries in the district (see map 2). The potential of visiting these sites consists in:

1. location of cemeteries in the area of international road E 371 between Presov (Slovakia) and Rzeszow (Poland) with potential of trans-border tourism
2. attractive mountain and foothill location predominantly in Ondavská Highlands and Laborecká Highlands with potential of mountain hiking, biking, cultural tourism and agro-tourism,
3. war memorials in Svidník and the Dukla Pass,
4. cemetery of German soldiers from World War II in the village Hunkovce with potential of ethno-tourism.

The above analysis shows that it is possible to consider the development of real dark tourism in the north-eastern region of Slovakia. In case of the district of Svidník is possible to design tourism products with a share of dark tourism. The natural and



Fig. 3 Cemetery - Paris Pere Lachaise a world example of sepulchral architecture

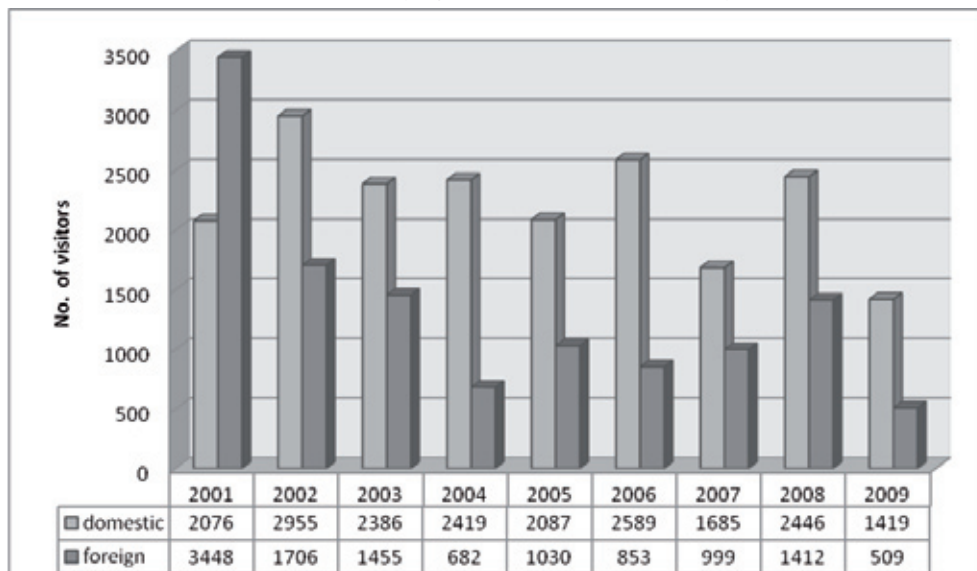
Source: Peter Čuka – author photography

anthropogenic tourist potential has also some limitations. Both considered cities do not have metropolitan character. Prešov with about 90 thousand citizens, Svidník with 12 thousand citizens and Rzeszow with about 180 thousand citizens with only a part of the population that would be interested in set of tourism products with a share of dark tourism. Another limitation is the poor technical condition of the road E 371. Travel restrictions of the road are in profile, terrain, technical condition and also in fluent driving. A significant limitation appears to be an insufficient capacity of tourism infrastructure and superstructure. Directly in Svidník are only two hotels with a capacity of about 85 beds and in the whole district there is a bed capacity of 390 beds only (www.statistics.sk). There are about 7 restaurants along E 371 and other

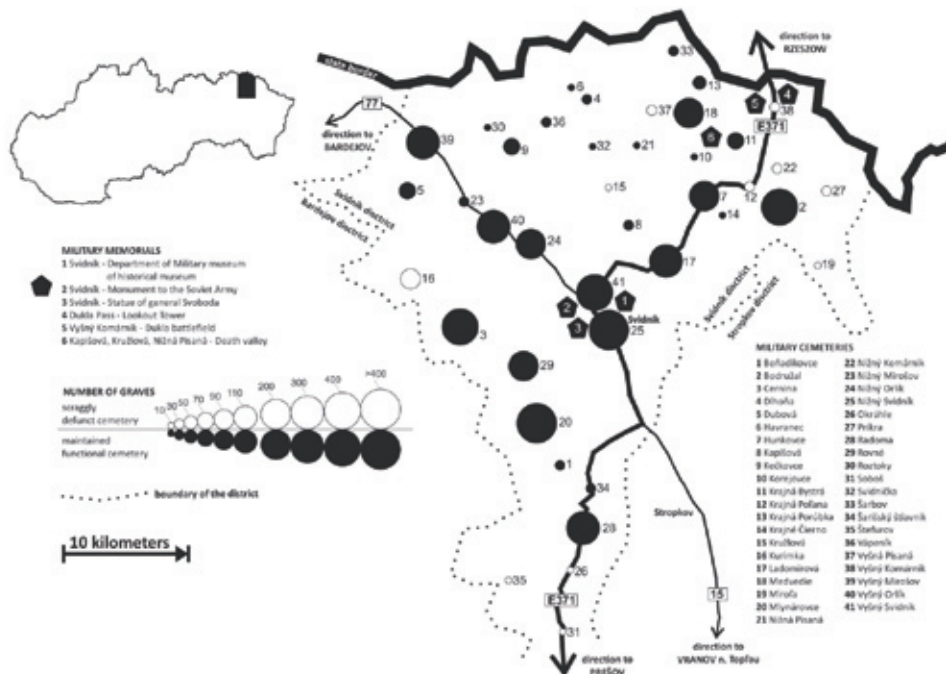
14 restaurants in Svidník. Statistical analyses of tourists staying in the district between 2001 - 2009 show a downward trend of visits, as well as smaller share of foreign tourists see graph 1.

Assuming a 10% interest in dark tourism with an average annual visiting about 3 thousand tourists staying in the district, we get a target group of about 300 "dark tourists". However, we think, that dark tourism in the investigated area can be conceived as part of the cognitive, cultural-historical and sport-recreational stays of tourists so that, e.g. visiting cemeteries of World War I is part of their daily program. Greater interest can only be addressed after a comprehensive completion of road infrastructure, including the complete reconstruction of E 371, wider supply of recreational activities - a good example is the

Graph 1. Number of tourists staying in the district Svidník in the years 2001 – 2009



Source: According to Slivková,S. (2011)



Map 2 Location of military cemeteries of World War I in the district of Svidník

Source: According to Slivková,S. (2011)

completion of a water world Svidník (including indoor swimming pools). A matter of course should be a complete tourist infrastructure and superstructure capacity with a good transregional and transnational management of tourism activities.

4 Conclusion

The presented contribution is exploratory and cognitive intersection of selected problems of dark tourism and also the result of empirical experience of one of the authors (see photos). It summarizes borders of dark tourism and its subtypes, especially thanatourism, sepulchral tourism. All these terms have historical roots that stretch back to the ancient era. At the end of the 20-th century, the cult of death became a part of pop

culture. Fiction but mostly cinematography has contributed to this. Motives and dark tourism destinations published by us point out that:

1. dark tourism is a part of cultural tourism,
2. some forms of dark tourism may have deviant motives and we refuse them to include into ethically and morally defined types and forms of tourism,
3. contribution is a basis for future research projects of dark tourism in our country, as it defines the motives as well as geographical extension in Slovakia,
4. contribution locates and analyzes the potential of sepulchral tourism in the region of eastern Slovakia, especially military memorials and military cemeteries of World War I.

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