

Holocaust Dental Gold Underestimated?

A few years ago I bought and read Otto Friedrich's "The Kingdom of Auschwitz" (Penguin Books, ISBN 0-14-025253-3). When I read the following short passage from it a thought occurred to me which remains in my mind and which experienced holocaust researchers might be able to help resolve:

"All the victims' hair was shaved off and stored. Then the Tooth Kommando, eight prisoners who had once been dental surgeons, set to work. They pried open the corpses' mouths and yanked out any gold teeth or bridgework they could find. The gold teeth were dropped into buckets filled with an acid that burned away all flesh and bone. According to Dr. Nyiszli's calculations, these operations recovered about eighteen to twenty pounds of gold per crematorium per day. The bodies were then loaded onto pushcarts, three to a cart, and slid into the ovens."

When I read this passage it seemed to me that the process of extracting "eighteen to twenty pounds of gold per crematorium per day" manually from the teeth of corpses must have been an extremely laborious and time-consuming one; and I wondered if the Nazi SS, notorious for its ruthless efficiency in the pursuit of its own advancement, had ever looked into the possibility of devising a more efficient method of reclaiming this amount of gold.

For example, such an increase in efficiency might have been implemented if it had been possible to design and build a crematorium which could "smelt" the gold fillings directly from the victims' teeth as they were being burned.

Many of the crematoria used to dispose of holocaust victims' bodies were dynamited and destroyed by the Nazis when death camps such as Auschwitz were abandoned, and it is widely accepted that this was done in an attempt to conceal their genocidal purpose.

(And if this is correct then one must conclude that the attempt failed.)

However, if we allow for the possibility that the destruction of the crematoria has successfully, whether intentionally or not, concealed from us some specific detail or details of the crematoria, then we can consider that there may be some significant aspect of the holocaust about which the complete truth is still not known.

If this is accepted then the following hypothesis may be put forward:

"In seeking to maximize the efficiency of the process of reclaiming gold dental fillings from their victims, the Nazis commissioned the construction of additional crematoria which were designed to extract the gold directly from the corpses' teeth during incineration. The parts of the crematoria designed to channel the molten gold from the incinerators to an area where it was allowed to cool and solidify were destroyed at the end of the war. Since these details have been successfully concealed it has always been assumed that gold fillings were only ever extracted manually from the victims' teeth and, as this is a much less efficient process, the total amount of dental gold reclaimed has been underestimated."

I am unable to offer any direct evidence in support of this hypothesis. My own opinion is that this hypothesis could be disproved by finding historically verifiable and scientifically accurate answers to the following questions:

- 1) Is it possible to design a crematorium in which gold dental fillings can be reclaimed directly from the teeth of a human corpse during incineration?
- 2) Is there any evidence that the Nazi SS could have built such a crematorium?
- 3) Were the Nazis more thorough in destroying the more recently built crematoria than the older ones at the end of the second world war?
- 4) Are estimates of the total amount of dental gold reclaimed from holocaust victims based entirely on how much could have been extracted manually?

Please note that there is no rhetorical intent to these questions. My sole purpose in posting this message is to try and find out if there is any possibility that the amount of dental gold stolen from victims of the holocaust has been underestimated.

Any authoritative replies will be welcome.

Sincerely,

Keith P Walsh

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Uploaded in PDF format with corrections – May 2014