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# INVISIBLE DESTINY? BORDERLANDS AND BORDERLANDERS AS THE TOPIC OF MUSEUM DISPLAYS AFTER 1989

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**Abstract:** The question of presenting the heritage of the Borderlands and the life of its inhabitants in Polish museums after 1989 is tackled. The main focus of interest are displays perceived as: 1) visual and public form of knowledge transfer; 2) the way of overcoming the trauma of losing one's native land; 3) tools for creating collective identity and 4) effects of the participation of Borderland circles in creating the display. The goal of the study is an overview of contemporary exhibitions dedicated to the Eastern Borderlands, and the experience of their loss as the result of WW II. Since the residents of the Borderlands were relocated to the 'former German' territories, the overview centres on the displays

from the Western and Northern Territories.

Apart from the local and national aspects, what matters is also the international dimension related to museum presentations of the 'lost land' and the fate of migrants. Therefore, the activity of Polish institutions is initially shown in the European context, through recalling the legal framework and working conditions of so called East German museums commemorating the 'German East' lost by Germany. The question of the reasons for the disproportion in the presentation of the topic between Poland and Germany is posed, while the to-date achievements of Polish museologists are presented.

**Keywords:** art of exhibition, participatory exhibition, Borderlands, Borderlanders, expatriation, Western and Northern Territories, museums of the 'German East'.

One of the effects of WW II was mass relocation of the population in East-Central Europe, this particularly having affected Polish citizens inhabiting the pre-war Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic as well as German citizens inhabiting the so-called 'German East'.<sup>1</sup> This is the experience suffered in total by around 2 million Poles and 14 million Germans; interestingly, the government of Communist Poland defined the migrants as so-called repatriates (this intending to hide the forced character of the relocation), while the West German government referred to those people as *Vertriebene, expelled* (this pointing out to the most drastic aspect of the process). The trauma of losing one's native land constitutes a major emotional component which, bearing in

mind the essential difference on the level of political reasons and moral responsibility for the nightmare of relocations, unites representatives of both societies. Hence in the literature on the subject the thesis of the parallel emotional character of the so-called German East and Polish Borderlands.<sup>1</sup> However, despite a similarly dramatic historical experience, following the end of the relocation wave in both German countries (West and East Germany) and the then Communist Poland (Polish People's Republic, PRL), major differences were revealed, these resulting from the political and economic contexts, as for the conditions and possibilities of confronting the trauma by Polish and German expatriates. In the process of confronting the trauma, the effort of memory plays an important role,<sup>3</sup> and

so does the social transfer of cultural memory to that part of society who did not suffer the loss of the native land, and to the future generations. For communicative memory of history witnesses preserved in families to become a component of cultural memory<sup>4</sup> (namely an element of live 'inhabited' functional memory<sup>4</sup> visible in public space and practised in social rituals), favourable conditions are essential: the capacity to communicate about the past openly and in an unfalsified way; to commemorate individuals, regions, and events connected with the lost homeland through the creation of new 'sites of memory' (*lieux de mémoire*); and thanks to museums as institutions crystallizing social memory and consolidating group identity, and as means of social transfer of knowledge, the museum-related issues being the focus of my interest. It is particularly in the era of the 'museum boom' characteristic of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the impact of tackling certain social and historical topics through museum institutions as knowledge-disseminating centres should be highlighted.

### Lack of proportions in museum presentations of the topic of lost homelands in the Polish-German context

The parallelism of the Polish and German experience with relation to the 'lost lands' has already been pointed to; furthermore, the question has been asked whether this likeness of the lived trauma has been reflected in the museum praxis of the Polish and both German states. Actually, the post-WW II situation of Polish expatriates can be compared with the situation of those German 'exiles' who in the number of about<sup>5</sup> million were relocated from the so-called German East into the Soviet Occupation Zone, later transformed into the Communist German Democratic Republic, subdued to the Soviet Union. There the migrants were not allowed to present their experience of escape and 'exile' within public space; neither were they permitted to associate within their own circles and create any sites of memory.<sup>6</sup> Both in GDR and Communist Poland that tabooing of the memory of the lost homeland was to serve first of all as a hiding veil for the imperialist policy of the USSR. Among Polish Borderlanders the memory of the family home abandoned in the East could only constitute a part of private memory, transferred to the next generation mainly via women-mothers thanks to infrequent artefacts that had survived the relocation.<sup>7</sup>

A different situation, far more beneficial for the collective memory of the migrants, was observed in West Germany. About 10 million German 'exiles', who settled down in the territory of the democratic West Germany, were given legal protection of their cultural heritage thanks to Section 96 called a culture section (*Kulturparagraf*) introduced in 1953 to the Law on Refugees and Exiles (BVFG – *Gesetz über die Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge*, w skrócie *Bundesvertriebenengesetz*). Its provisions obliged West German local and central authorities to preserve, care for, and promote the cultural heritage of the former 'German East'. Such a top-down legal rooting in combination with grassroot activity of the 'exiles' themselves led to the creation of a rich museum landscape, currently composed of e.g. 590 regional chambers<sup>8</sup> and 7 large national museums dedicated to such historical regions as Silesia, Pomerania, East Prussia, West Prussia, and Transylvania.<sup>9</sup>

The 1989 transformation yielded the continuation of the so-far policy of the preservation of the lost heritage of the 'German East'. Following the reunification of Germany in 1991, the application of Section 96 was extended onto the new states, thanks to which modern museums in Pomerania's Gryfia (*Pommersches Landesmuseum, Greifswald*) and Silesia's Görlitz (*Schlesisches Museum*) were launched. In Berlin, the central 'exile' museum, so-called Visible Sign, was opened. Regrettably, in central Poland the knowledge of the work of the 'German East'-related institutions is limited, despite the fact that the majority of them tell the story of the past of the territories incorporated into Poland after 1945, namely Western and Northern Territories (also referred to as Regained Territories).<sup>10</sup> For both countries the period following 1989 proved to be of breakthrough impact in relation to the topics of relocations and their presentation in museology. In Germany it was the continuation and extension of the state policy initiated in the 1950s, in Poland it was social and grassroot 'de-forgetting'<sup>11</sup> of the topics banned as taboo in Communist Poland.

In the further part of the article a closer look will be taken at how the heritage, this time that of Polish citizens living in the pre-WW II Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic, began to find room not only in feature and recollection writing, not only in dust-covered archives and museum collections, but first of all within public visual space: in museum displays serving as social communication media.

### Memory of the Borderlands in Polish collective memory

The memory of the Borderlands is important first of all for the people suffering from the family trauma of the relocation. What community do I mean today when speaking of contemporary Borderlanders? In 2012, pollsters of the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) conducted an awareness investigation related to the roots of Poles coming from the Borderlands. The name Borderlands served to denominate *territories east of the current border of Poland that before WW II had belonged to the Polish Republic, or remained outside its borders, yet were inhabited by large groups of Poles, and that are now part of the territories of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania*.<sup>12</sup> The surveys allowed to assess that currently between, 4.3 and 4.6 million citizens over 18 deriving their genealogy from the former Borderlands live in Poland.<sup>13</sup> The biggest number of the expatriates' descendants currently inhabit the following: Lubusz (51%), Lower Silesian (47%), Opole (30%), West Pomeranian (25%), Warmia-Masuria (18%), and Pomeranian (17%) Voivodeships.<sup>14</sup> These are territories that had been within the borders of the German state and the Free City of Danzig prior to WW II. The smallest number of population declaring their Borderlands origins live in central and south-eastern Poland, in : Świętokrzyskie (3%), Lesser Poland (4%), Łódź (5%), Masovian (10%), and Lublin (10%) Voivodeships. The figures account for the directions of forced migration of the Borderlanders discouraged by the Communist authorities from settling down in former central Poland, while at the same time showing the spatial layout of the community potentially most responsive to cherishing cultural memory of the Borderlands, also through creating exhibitions and sites of memory of the Borderlands.

However, a qualitative sociological research conducted in 2013–15 among the Borderlanders' circles demonstrated bitterness in reaction to central authorities' indolence and lack of interest in the topic of the lost homelands.<sup>15</sup> According to the interviewees of Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, the memory of the Eastern Borderlands is for the Polish state a problem, purposefully pushed into the zone of private memory, marginalized, and folklorized, while the Borderlands-related initiatives are an exclusive 'problem' of those whom they may concern: (...) *this memory is neither banned, nor combated, however neither is it supported by the state and does not constitute a key element of Polish collective memory.*<sup>16</sup>

When looking into the current registers of museums, run by the National Institute for Museums and Public Collections (NIMOZ) and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (MKiDN) (May 2019), three museum organizations can be found there that feature the word 'Borderlands' in their name. They are two private institutions from the Masovian Voivodeship and one run by a local government from the Subcarpathian Voivodeship, namely: Museum of Lvov and South-Eastern Borderlands at Kuklówka Radziejowicka (registered in 2011), Museum of the Borderlands and Ostrowia Land in Ostrowia Mazowiecka (2013), as well as the Museum of Borderlands in Lubaczów (1958; as the Museum of Borderlands since 2004). The critical opinion of the researched Borderlanders on the assistance from the state is reflected in the way 'Borderlands-related' institutions are supported: they are financed with the resources of private individuals, foundations, and meagre local-government means, while their share in the state budget financing exclusively depends on their engagement in the current political topics (e.g. that of the Cursed Soldiers) or the ability to gain project-allocated financing. A certain dissonance can also be caused by the altered meaning of the term 'Borderlands', e.g. adding it to strictly local topics (Ostrów Mazowiecka) or its transfer to be Polish-Ukrainian borderland (Lubaczów).

On the other hand, the picture is not so dramatic, since Borderlanders' collections are stored and elaborated in many state and local government museum institutions, while the displays on the destiny of the Borderlanders have been acquiring financing from MKiDN; what is more, since not long ago the care for the Polish cultural heritage left beyond the current borders of Poland has been performed by the POLONIKA National Institute of Polish Cultural Heritage Abroad.<sup>17</sup> However, what needs to be emphasized is the questionable disproportion in scale and stability of this activity between Poland and Germany, namely in the European context, which reflects lack of legal and financial frameworks for a continuous monitoring of the Borderlands-related topics in Polish museums.

### Borderlands in displays – three strategies of visibility

The term Borderlands has already been defined with reference to the CBOS survey. As for the 'Borderlands'-related display, the name will be used to define an exhibition which uses artefacts that come from the old Eastern Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Second Polish Republic which and/or chooses as the main topic the history and culture of the Borderlands and Borderlanders, in the

past and currently. On the grounds of such a definition one may be tempted to delineate a certain typology referring to a peculiar 'visibility' of the topics of the Borderlands within the exhibition space:

1. The Borderlands are one of the elements of the overall narrative of the exhibition;
2. The Borderlands are an element of specialist exhibitions, created out of the own collections of the museums in the territory of post-war Poland and the collections rented out of the museums of present-day Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine;
3. The memory of the Borderlands and the fate of Borderlanders are the essential topic of exhibitions created within the circles connected with the Borderlands: as the carrier of social memory and the material building collective identity in a given region.

Ad.1. The heritage of the Borderlands as an element of an overall museum narrative gained its appreciated position in Polish display regardless of the political system: artistic and crafts works, as well as ethnographic objects, had been displayed also in the period of Communist Poland, though in the exhibits' descriptions the revealing of their provenance was avoided. In contemporary museums in which the loss of the Borderlands is no longer a taboo topic, it serves as an element of the overall narrative of the history and culture of the Polish Republic. This is, for example, the case of Warsaw's POLIN Museum, the WW II Museum in Gdansk, or the Migration Museum in Gdynia. The Borderlands will also continue an important element of the story of the Polish-Lithuanian multinational and multidimensional state.

Ad. 2. The quantitatively hard to define, and ample set is made up of specialist thematic exhibitions: historical, artistic, and ethnographic, which concentrate on a selected aspect. What is meant here are exhibitions of respective Borderlands collections (e.g. of photography, prints, painting, ceramics), or peculiar craft techniques (e.g. textiles, Easter eggs). They are organized thanks to the collections of respective museums amassed even from before WW II, private collections, or temporary rentals from museums in the territory of today's Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine. Such displays are characteristic of museums of central Poland, mainly of Warsaw and Cracow (National, Independence, Katyń Museums, History Meeting House in Warsaw, Ethnographic Museum in Cracow), but also of Lower Silesia, where some collections were evacuated together with the relocated population (Ossolineum, Ethnographic Museum in Wrocław). Also the museums of contemporary 'Borderlands' of south-eastern Poland (in inverted comas, since this name does not refer to the lands lost following WW II) boast rich collections that come from the historical actually lost Borderlands, e.g. museums in Zamość, Włodawa, or the Border Land Museum in Lubaczów.

Ad.3. However, in the European context brought forth in the introduction to this paper, I focussed particularly on the third type of my distinction: exhibitions showing the history and culture of the Borderlands as well as the lives of Borderlanders, thus stemming from the needs of a definite circle, and constituting a response to overcoming (*przepracowanie*) of trauma by subsequent generations; formed in cooperation with the migrants and formulating a message on their destiny to contemporary society.

Therefore in the further part of the article I am going to present examples of such exhibitions: first chronologically after the fall of the Communist regime in 1989, and then synchronically: in Western and Northern Lands, as inhabited to a great degree by heirs of the Borderlanders. The presentation will regrettably be selective, since there exists no complete virtual archive in Poland, and there is no coordination of varied initiatives related to the Borderlands.<sup>18</sup> On the issue let me once again quote the German context and the online documentation of 590 chambers of memory of the 'exiled' prepared by the Federal Institute for Culture and History of the Germans in Eastern Europe located in Oldenburg.<sup>19</sup> Despite efforts of local authorities in various regions (e.g. in Subcarpathians<sup>20</sup>) in Poland there exists no central and complete database of museum objects, collections, and displays of Borderlands provenance.

### **Documentation of collections and exhibitions after 1989: *Museum Encounters with the Borderlands***

Mounting exhibitions related strictly to the Borderland heritage and the experience of its loss, officially possible after the fall of Communism, resulted from the boom of Borderlanders' Associations after 1989. Unfortunately, their documentations are dispersed, hence an example worth emphasizing are post-conference publications by the Warsaw Museum of Independence who hosted the 2008 and 2011 *Museum Encounters with the Borderlands*.<sup>21</sup> Their respective papers describe collections of Borderlanders' provenance found in museums, libraries, and state archives (e.g. National Museum in Warsaw, National Library in Warsaw, National Digital Archives, and Cracow's Museum of History of Photography), these including collections from definite towns and regions, for example from Lvov, that create the core of the collections of the e.g. Leopold Collection of Warsaw's Museum of Independence, or the Prince Czartoryski Library in Cracow. Furthermore, the collections of the Ethnographic Museums in Cracow and Wrocław were taken into consideration. Most importantly, however, the displays described are strictly those dedicated explicitly to the Borderlands and Borderlanders. The most interesting initiatives seem the ones undertaken in the 1990s in Łódź, Warsaw, and Gdansk.

Precedence with respect to making available for public viewing of the owned Borderlanders' collections and to the participation of the Borderlanders in the display through a public collection of exhibits should be given to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography in Łódź which as early as in 1990 held the Exhibition titled 'From the Land on the Neman, Pripjat, and Dniester Rivers' (script Iwona Świętosławska).<sup>22</sup> The Warsaw Museum of Independence initiated the Borderlands-related topics in 1993 with the 'Lvov Treasures' Exhibition. Of excellence was also the Exhibition titled: 'Eastern Borderlands. Land and People' (1997/1998) in which the Museum displayed over 1.200 items from the collections of 37 museums, libraries, and archives, as well as of 30 private individuals (script Helena Wiórkiewicz).<sup>23</sup> The Exhibition was *conceived as a kind of wandering, trip into the historical past, on which different places and localities were visited, traces of the activity of illustrious Borderlanders or of ordinary people were*

*encountered, sometimes traces of important events, in other cases of ordinary everyday life in the Borderlands.*<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, the first museum to tackle the previously tabooed topic of the so-called repatriation from the Eastern Borderlands was the Ethnography Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, with its seat in Oliwa. The 1998 Exhibition titled: 'What Did the "Repatriates"' Suitcases Hide?' was possible first of all thanks to the cooperation with the circle of Gdansk Borderlanders from whom over 400 exhibits were obtained<sup>25</sup> (script: Wiktoria Blacharska). The main topic of the Gdansk Exhibition was the experience of the forced trip, and showing it through the content of the title 'suitcases' brought with them by the inhabitants of Borderlands towns, villages, and manors. The Exhibition's success started its tour across the cities in which there was demand for this topic among the local Borderlanders' circles. It was them who completed the display with their personal objects, photos, and documents wherever the display was shown: the Museum of Central Pomerania in Słupsk (1999), Museum in Mrągowo (1999), Museum in Łębork (1999/2000), Ethnographic Museum in Poznań (2000).<sup>26</sup> The crowning of this itinerary was the display held in Vilnius in 2009. Thanks to it also a fragment of contemporary Lithuanian society learnt something about the life of their Polish neighbours 'exiled' from the Vilnius Region.

Both in Łódź, Warsaw, and in Gdansk, the first Borderlands-related exhibitions proved to start the snowball effect, thus an increasingly stronger participation of Borderlanders' circles in the subsequent displays, re-launch of museum preliminary researches in the collections conducted in view of objects' provenance from the Borderlands, the latter earlier concealed.

This tendency can be found in 7 subsequent Borderlands exhibitions mounted in the Ethnographic Department of the National Museum in Gdansk in 1995–2005, e.g. 'My Lvov' (1999); 'The Land of Constant Longing: Polesia and Volhynia' (1999–2000); 'Grodno and Wołkowysk in the Second Polish Republic' (2001); 'Discovering Hutsulshchyna' (2002); 'The Braclaw Voivodeship: the Edge of the Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic' (2004–05). However, it was not only in Pomerania that the topic of the Borderlands was de-tabooed. In 2010, the Museum in Gliwice in Upper Silesia implemented an ambitious research project and held the Exhibition: 'Gliwice Borderlanders', also documented in the publication of the Museum of Independence<sup>27</sup> and a catalogue (Curator: Bożena Kubit).<sup>28</sup> Like this the important motif of the Borderlanders who following WW II contributed to the development of Upper Silesia was tackled; worth mentioning at this point is the big number of professors of the Lvov Polytechnic who following their expatriation organized the University of Technology in Gliwice.

The documentation of the *Museum Encounters with the Borderlands* focused essentially on the collections, also museum ones, of mainly objects of high artistic culture. Few of the Borderlands-related displays described here and mounted in 1990–2010 were temporary exhibitions held by large museums in Warsaw, Łódź, Gdańsk, Wrocław, and Gliwice.

In the further section of the present paper, a closer look at the exhibitions available recently, and organized mainly thanks to the participation of local Borderlanders' circles as well as their descendants will be taken, therefore we need to transfer to Poland's Western and Northern Territories.

## Contemporary Borderlands-related displays: Western and Northern Territories

The main destination of the wandering of the expatriates from the Vilnius Region was the broadly understood Pomerania (geographically covering also Masuria and Warmia as regions adjacent to the Baltic). Prior to WW II the area had included German Eastern Prussia (*Ostpreußen*), Polish Pomeranian Voivodeship with the capital in Torun, the Free City of Gdansk (*Freie Stadt Danzig*) and also Back Pomerania (*Hinterpommern*). Currently, the territory is divided into three voivodeships in which CBOS observed a substantial percentage of Borderlanders: Pomeranian (17%), Warmian-Masurian (18%), and West Pomeranian (25%).

A particular mosaic can be found in the Lubusz Voivodeship: in the pre-WW II Germany it had formed part of the Margraviate of Brandenburg, in which influences of 4 historical regions crisscrossed: the Lubusz Region, Lusatia, Greater Poland, and Lower Silesia. According to CBOS, it is here that the largest percentage of Borderlanders' descendents live in proportion to the population of the Voivodeship (51%). They were newcomers from the south-eastern voivodeships detached from Poland: the Lvov, Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Volhynia, and Polesia Voivodeships. A similar situation was observed in the neighbouring Lower-Silesian Voivodeship with the central position of Wrocław and Ossolineum as an institution with outstanding collections of the Borderlands provenance (47%). Upper Silesia covered two Voivodeships in which the share of

the descendants of Borderlanders was substantial: the Opole Voivodeship (30%) and Silesian Voivodeship (11%). At this point it has to be emphasized that the memory of Borderlanders relocated from southern voivodeships is overshadowed by the homicide of the Polish population in Galicia and Volhynia. The question can be asked if and if so, to what extent, different memories of expatriates from different regions of the Borderlands are reflected in the exhibitions.

The below overview of displays is necessarily arbitrary and selective. Except for one so-called wild museum, it relates to the institutions listed in the updated register of museums of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (as of May 2019), however it demonstrates the variety of communication and display strategies in relation to the heritage of the Borderlands and Borderlanders in Western and Northern Territories.

**Warmia: Olsztyn.** In 2009, in the Museum of Warmia and Masuria in Olsztyn, registering of the life stories of Borderlanders as part of the Oral History Project of Archives of Spoken History was launched (Curator: Kinga Raińska).<sup>29</sup> In cooperation with local Borderlanders, over 12.000 documents and artefacts were digitized, while expatriates gave over 2.000 objects for an exhibition. Respective stages of the Exhibition 'Poles from the Eastern Borderlands in Warmia and Masuria' were presented at the main seat of the Museum of Warmia and Masuria at the Olsztyn Castle (2011–12), at museums in Warmia (Museum of Warmia in Lidzbark Warmiński, 2016–2017) and in Masuria: Museum of Folk Architecture in Olsztynek (2014), Museum



1. Furnishing of a drawing-room in a Borderland manor, Masurian Museum in Szczytno; 'Poles from the Eastern Borderland in Warmia and Masuria' Exhibition, 2017



2. Life of a settler on the Regained Territories, Masurian Museum in Szczytno; 'Poles from the Eastern Borderland in Warmia and Masuria' Exhibition, 2017



4. Luggage of the 'repatriate' from the Vilnius Region, Museum of Folk Culture in Węgorzewo, 'Poles from the Vilnius Region' Exhibition, 2017



3. On the way to the relocation, Museum of Warmia in Lidzbark Warmiński, 'Poles from the Eastern Borderland in Warmia and Masuria' Exhibition, 2017

in Mrągowo (2014–15), Masurian Museum in Szczytno (2017–18). The Exhibition accompanied by a catalogue, in subsequent setting variants demonstrated spaces within Borderland manors, the trauma of so-called expatriates, and slow taming of the territory of Eastern Prussia. The fate of 'expatriates' was presented as a collective fate, meanwhile individual stories were registered thanks to the recordings provided for the display. The Exhibition archive is available online, however due to the temporary Project's financing interviews with Borderlanders were recorded only in the course of its implementation (three years); currently, the Exhibition has been dismantled.

**Mazuria: Węgorzewo.** In 2017, the Museum of Folk Culture in Węgorzewo showed the 'Poles from the Vilnius Region' (Curator: Krystyna Jarosz). Similarly as the Exhibition at the Museum of Warmia and Masuria, here, too, three stages typical of the expatriate experience were shown: the idealized past of the Vilnius Region, forced relocation, taming of the new space and cherishing the memory of the native land. Characteristic exhibits, such as the map of the Second Republic of Poland, photos and family mementoes, luggage and documents connected with 'repatriation', flat furnishing in post-WW II Poland, as well as products of crafts meant to remind of the

Borderlands. An outstanding advantage of the Węgorzewo Exhibition can be found in the definite attribution of artefacts to defined donors (thus showing individual life stories). Regrettably, this precious local display was not documented.<sup>30</sup> **Gdansk Pomerania: Gdansk.** Mention has already been made of a cycle of exhibitions prepared by the Ethnographic Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk located in Oliwa. Furthermore, in 2017 at the branch of the Historical Museum of the City of Gdansk,<sup>31</sup> namely at the Uphagen House in Długa Street, the biographical exhibition titled 'I Decided to Come to Gdansk Straight Away. Profiles of Gdansk Borderlanders' was shown. The Exhibition was created in cooperation of the city museum with the Society of Lovers of Vilnius and the Vilnius Region, and was dedicated to 14 illustrious female and male Borderlanders who following WW II participated in the rebuilding of scientific, cultural, and economic life of the city. The Exhibition was based on artefacts borrowed from families of expatriates from the Vilnius Region and Galicia. After dismantling, the information boards from the display are currently in the Gdansk Borderlands House in Wrzeszcz, yet the exhibition as such was not documented.<sup>32</sup> **Central Pomerania: Słupsk and Swółowo.** Single elements of material culture of the expatriates from the Vilnius Regions



5. Repatriates were only allowed to take with them photographs and family documents, Museum of Folk Culture in Węgorzewo, 'Poles from the Vilnius Region' Exhibition, 2017



6. Unveiling of the Tribute to Borderlanders Monument, Gdańsk 2015, from the left: Paweł Adamowicz, Gdańsk Mayor, Bożena Kisiel, President of the Association of Lovers of Vilnius and the Vilnius Region



7. Evacuation coffer as seen against the Gate of Dawn, Museum of the History of Gdańsk, Uphagen House, 'I Immediately Chose Gdańsk' Exhibition, 2017

were presented in displays dedicated to folk culture at the Museum of Central Pomerania in Słupsk already in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>33</sup> In 2001, the Borderlands-related Exhibition called 'On the Neris and Neman Rivers' was displayed there (Curator: Marzenna Mazur). Similarly as in other regions, also in Słupsk the Exhibition was an opportunity for a peculiar mobilizations of the circles of Borderlanders. (...) *the people beautifully responded to the appeal of museologists to bring family mementoes for the Exhibition. It was possible to collect many paintings, family portraits, evacuation cards, or old photo albums and postcards. Elderly people who offered their objects as exhibits were proud that they could present their mementoes. They pointed to the fact that often their own children or grandchildren were not interested in those things, and now they would be in a museum exhibition. This was a peculiar ennoblement for them.*<sup>34</sup> The Exhibition was documented in the catalogue, and following a rearrangement of some of the exhibits, it ended up in the permanent display at the Castle Mill. Titled 'Settlers Were Moving Westwards. Cultural Identity of the Population who Arrived in Pomerania after 1945', the 2002 Exhibition, documented in a catalogue, was a continuation of the process.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently, in 2004–13, Słupsk museologists, supported with EU financing, reconstructed so-called Albrecht farm and arranged some buildings in the village of Swołowo to serve display purposes, creating a complex open-air exhibition, combining the genuine in situ setting and historical, ethnographical, as well as nature-related topics. The modern arrangement of the display allowed to confront the German past of Schwolow with the present of the Polish settlers after 1945. The migrants came from central Poland, Kashubia, and Eastern Borderlands. Their oral testimony can now be heard in the multi-media part of the Exhibition.<sup>36</sup>

**Western Pomerania: Szczecin.** The juxtaposing of the 'migrant's luggage' of the German and Polish 'exiles' can be seen not only in rustic Swołowo, but also in the permanent display at the National Museum in Szczecin, at the City History Museum in Szczecin to be precise, in the Exhibition opened in 2009 and titled 'Hans Stettiner and Jan Szczeciński: Everyday Life in Szczecin in the 20<sup>th</sup> century'.<sup>37</sup> Documented with a catalogue,<sup>38</sup> the display spreads a deeply humanistic message, speaking of the Pomeranian everyman: an ordinary citizen of the city, sharing similar life concerns, and going through biographical stages, regardless of the nationality. The supreme principle of the display is a consistent juxtaposing of the German past of Stettin with the post-WW II contemporary Szczecin, co-shaped by Polish returned expatriates from the West and expats from the East. Departures and arrivals are symbolized by suitcases, suggestively illustrating the fate of former and new Pomeranian residents. This presentation format was partly retained in the newest branch of the National Museum in Szczecin, namely in the Dialogue Centre 'Upheavals'. In the display fragment called 'Fear', the visitor can see everyday life and religious artefacts of the Pomeranian autochthons and Polish newcomers from the different corners of the lost territories and central Poland: toys, paintings, clothing garments, suitcases. Furthermore, the offer of museum-related events contains relocation motifs, centred around outstanding individuals descending from the Borderlands. The Exhibition is available online thanks to the 3D function of virtual visiting.

**The Lubusz Land: Zielona Góra-Ochla.** In the capital of the Lubusz Voivodeship the Borderlands topic is not explicitly presented in the historical exhibition at the city museum, though in the activity of the Lubusz Land Museum in Zielona Góra temporary exhibitions, events, and publications can



be observed that focus on these resident groups: German autochthons and newcomers-Borderlanders who have come to share the same destiny.<sup>39</sup> The material culture of the Polish settlers from the East is presented in the current temporary Exhibition titled 'Multicultural Character of the Lubusz Region. Folk Culture Artefacts' (Curator: Irena Sopka) at the Ethnographic Museum in Zielona Góra-Ochla.<sup>40</sup> The open-air part of the permanent exhibition features peasant cottages, farms, and their furnishing coming from, among others, property of the relocated population; for example, a peasant cottage from Jurzyn in Lower Lusatia, abandoned by a Lusatian family, presents artefacts of material culture of the former Tarnopol Voivodeship: colourful embroidery adorning clothing garments, curtains and decorative textiles. Individual audio guides allow visitors to gain information on the furnishing and overall history of the autochthon families and settlers. Borderlands heritage is shown as a fragment of a broader sociological phenomenon: the post-WW II multicultural character of the region. Furthermore, the open-air museum also hosts events that echo the Borderlands' tradition, e.g. spring Saint Casimir's Fair, so-called *Kaziuki*, or cultivates elements of folk craftsmanship (e.g. Easter palms). **Lower Silesia: Węglińiec.** The social phenomenon of grassroots activity of Borderlanders can be seen in the amateur (so-called 'wild' in the classification referring to the anthropology of Lévi-Strauss<sup>41</sup>) Museum of Eastern Borderlands and Podolia Chamber in Węglińiec, founded and run by Alfred

Janicki, a retired history teacher. It is made up of two train cargo carriages and a large room in the building of a fire station, so-called Podolia Chamber. The carriages feature a board display related to the Borderlands and massacres in Ukraine, as well as photos and documents of expats (originals and copies). Inside the building, thanks to furniture, textiles, paintings, books, and other everyday artefacts, Alfred Janicki reconstructed house living space. He himself had been saved in Volhynia, and he is the central pillar of the amateur establishment: it is only his story that accounts for subsequent exhibits and is decisive for the display's perception.<sup>42</sup>

**Upper Silesia (Opole Silesia): Nysa.** Following WW II, the Opole Voivodeship became home to almost 180.000 relocated Borderlanders from the Lvov, Stanisławów, and Tarnopol Voivodeships.<sup>43</sup> In the Nysa County descendants of the expatriates are said to constitute even as many as 70 per cent of the population, therefore in 2015 the County Museum in Nysa launched the permanent Exhibition titled 'The Borderlands in the Memory of the Nysa County Inhabitants'. The display could be mounted thanks to the participation and donations of the local community, who provided the Museum with their family mementoes, photos, documents, and recollections. Thanks to a simple chronologically-thematic arrangement as well as certain elements of the setting (showcases, boards, furniture), respective families and their memory of the lost home territories were commemorated. Importantly, the



8. Suitcases of the Germans leaving Stettin and Poles arriving in the town; fragment of the permanent exhibition opened in 2009: 'Hans Stettin and Jan Szczeciński. Everyday Life in Szczecin in the 20th century', National Museum in Szczecin, Szczecin's History Museum



9. Interior of a Lusatia hut where settlers from the Eastern Borderland came to live; Ethnographic Museum in Ochla, 2019



10. Cargo carriages as display space, Alfred Janicki, private Museum of Polish Eastern Borderland in Węgliniec, 2018



11. Furnishing of the Podolia Chamber at the old fire station, Museum of Polish Eastern Borderland in Węglińiec, 2018

(Fot. 1-5, 7, 9-11 – M.I. Sacha; 6 – ze zbiorów B. Kisiel; 8 – G. Solecki, A. Piętak)

Exhibition was mounted as permanent, which testifies to the importance of the topic in the local awareness.

**Upper Silesia: Gliwice, Bytom.** The comprehensively elaborated Exhibition at the Gliwice Museum called 'Gliwice Borderlanders' from 2010 has been documented in the above-mentioned publication of the Museum of Independence, as well as in the catalogue with an attached DVD video documentation. On for several months, it brought together a numerous group of Borderlanders, both in the course of the preparation, and in the course of Exhibition's perception. Currently it should be available in its virtual format.<sup>44</sup>

Of interest is also the energetic activity of the Bytom Upper Silesia Museum with respect to the Borderlands topics, this visible in hosting since 2012 annual Borderlands conferences: e.g. *Woman in the Borderlands* (2014), *Myth of the Eastern Borderlands* (2015), *Education and Science in the Eastern Borderlands in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (2016), *Jews in the Eastern Borderlands in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (2017), *Borders of Freedom – Borders of Independent Poland 1918–22* (2018).<sup>45</sup> The international conferences are usually accompanied by temporary exhibitions dedicated to definite aspects of the Borderlands' history and culture. In the recent years the following have been shown: 'Borderlands' Towns and Localities. Józef Dańda's Photographs'<sup>46</sup> 'Sports in the Borderlands', or 'Borderlands' Judaica from the Former House of Prayer in Bytom'. Importantly, the Bytom institution's activity reaches beyond sentimental memory, concentrating on academic studies.

## Prospects?

Several common features can be named in the above-described Borderlands-related exhibitions. Firstly, they are mounted thanks to grassroot efforts of museologists and private individuals, e.g. collectors, members of Borderlanders' associations. The most frequent procedure involves instigation of museologists, activists, and local-government officials of Borderlanders' descent. In the majority of cases the exhibitions are of participatory character at the preparatory stage (collecting exhibits) and the documentation one (artefacts' digitizing, recording testimony of the witnesses to the living history). In many minor museums it is only the initiative to mount an exhibition that stimulates preliminary research of Borderlands-related collections. Numerous museologists involved in the Borderlands-related topics complain about the lack of a top-down support once the project is completed: despite the work done to amass exhibits for the display, once this is over, the collection is dispersed.

Secondly, the exhibitions are of participatory character for Borderlanders,<sup>47</sup> this thanks to sharing their private collections and family stories. They become the space for the 'de-forgetting', and encounter point for members of Borderlanders' associations. Another important element is their inter-generational aspect: in many families the grandchildren familiar with IT technology only when assisting their grandparents in elaborating their recollections for the exhibition project, learnt about their forefathers' history and descent. In this very way the Borderlanders' descent

that grandchildren and great-grandchildren understood as having been 'somewhere from Russia' has been in way rehabilitated in the perception of the younger generations.

Thirdly, Borderlands-related exhibitions<sup>48</sup> are more of ethnographic than historical character. Regrettably, this causes the attribution of the topics of the Borderlands and their loss to the anonymous generalizing narration of 'the life in the past', told with everyday life artefacts. Therefore it sometimes happens so that despite the presentation of the Borderlands-related topics in an exhibition, they remain invisible to many visitors without additional information (a guide).

Fourthly, even if Borderlands-related exhibitions gain financial support from local governments or state institutions, the financing is periodic (project-allocated). Following the exhibitions some artefacts occasionally become part of permanent exhibitions, but most frequently are dispersed. Digital documentation is useful, however not always durable, since following the projects museums most frequently do not have resources for the upkeep of the relevant portal.

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In the introduction I pointed to the disproportion in the stable position of the 'lost homeland' in Polish and German museologies, resulting from longstanding legal differences, and most likely also economic ones, too. The diagnosis of the causes for the lack of far-reaching care of the Polish state for exposing the topics of the Borderlands in public space goes beyond the scope of this study, however the difference has

been noted, and bitterly commented on by the circles of Borderlanders, the latter confirmed by sociological research. Hence the prospects for the continuation of Borderlands-related exhibitions in the regions where the interest in the topic is most vivid seems to me bleak to say the least; this also accounted for by the giving up on the planned raising of the Museum of Western Territories in Wrocław and by locating the planned Museum of the Borderlands,<sup>49</sup> following the change of its name [sic!] to the Museum of Eastern Territories of the Former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in Lublin, namely in central Poland lacking the post-war circles of Borderlanders and the tradition of mounting Borderlands'-related exhibitions in the above-described meaning of the term.<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, the heritage of the Borderlands is not merely the heritage of all the citizens of the multicultural and multi religious Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also the heritage of Europe, to the same extent as the heritage of the former 'German East'. The fate of Borderlanders, expatriates forced by the totalitarian regime to forget their homelands, who were at the same time settlers and pioneers contributing to the economy of the territories incorporated into post-war Poland, is emblematic of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is not yet subsequent volumes of academic studies, but visual displays that play a helpful role in disseminating knowledge of the Borderlands and in confronting the social trauma, or more justly said today the post-trauma of their loss. The topic certainly deserves being appreciated and professionally approached, or otherwise the destiny of Borderlanders will remain invisible in Polish museums.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The area of German settlement in Central and Eastern Europe since the early Middle Ages

<sup>2</sup> See: C. Klessmann, R. Traba, *Kresy & niemiecki Wschód. W poszukiwaniu arkadii i celu misji cywilizacyjnej* [The Borderlands & the German East. In Search of Arcadia and Civilizational Mission], in: *Polsko-niemieckie miejsca pamięci. Deutsch-polnische Erinnerungsorte* [Polish-German Sites of Memory. Deutsch-polnische Erinnerungsorte], R. Traba; H.-H. Hahn (ed.), Vol. 3 – *Paralele* [Parallels], M. Górny, J. Górny, K. Kończal (coop.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2012.

<sup>3</sup> According to Paul Ricoeur, the work of memory should create conditions allowing to manifest the past in a true recollection, thanks to the courage of facing the past. It should aim to go through effective regret, a reaction to the loss of a beloved object: individual, ideal, or (in the case of collective entities) state territory, etc. Thanks to experiencing the regret, the subjects can rid themselves of the traumatic past, see: M. Bugajewski, M. Saryusz-Wolska, entry: *Praca pamięci* [Work of Memory], in: *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci* [Modi memorandi. Lexicon of the Culture of Memory], M. Saryusz-Wolska, R. Traba (ed.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2014, pp. 393-95.

<sup>4</sup> The concepts of communicative and cultural memory in compliance with the theory worked out by Jan and Aleida Assmann, see: A. Assmann, *Przestrzenie pamięci. Formy i przemiany pamięci kulturowej* [Spaces of Memory. Forms and Transformations of Cultural Memory], P. Przybyła (transl.), in: *Pamięć zbiorowa i kulturowa. Współczesna perspektywa niemiecka* [Collective and Cultural Memory. Contemporary German Perspective], M. Saryusz-Wolska (ed.), Universitas, Kraków 2009, pp. 101-42.

<sup>5</sup> The concept of functional memory was elaborated by Aleida Assmann. This type of memory *implements basic tasks of constructing identity-creating images of the past meant to consolidate a group. This memory requires continuous practices and rituals, active reception of canonical texts and images. Orientation towards the future contributes to its dynamics and changeability.* – M. Saryusz-Wolska, entry: *Pamięć funkcjonalna* [Functional memory], in: *Modi memorandi...*, pp. 325-26.

<sup>6</sup> M. Schwartz, *Der historische deutsche Osten in der Erinnerungskultur der DDR*, in: *Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten in der Erinnerungskultur*, J.-D. Gauger, M. Kittel (Hrsg.), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. und Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Sankt Augustin 2005, pp. 69-84; online: [http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas\\_7309-544-1-30.pdf?051011161046](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_7309-544-1-30.pdf?051011161046) [Accessed: 21 May 2019].

<sup>7</sup> The decisive role of women in the transfer of the memory of Borderlanders in: I. Sobieraj, *Jeszcze Kresowianie czy już Ślązacy? Pamięć przesiedleń a tożsamość i więź ze Śląskiem Opolskim w narracjach Kresowian i ich potomków* [Still Borderlanders or Already Silesians? Memory of Relocations versus Identity and Bond with Opole Silesia in Narratives of Borderlanders and Their Descendants], in: *Migracje w doświadczeniach śląskich, polsko-niemieckich i europejskich* [Migrations in Silesian, Polish-German, and European Experience], R. Jończy (ed.), Dom Współpracy Polsko-Niemieckiej, Gliwice-Opole 2016, pp. 54-63.

- <sup>8</sup> The network of homeland chambers described in the monograph: C. Eisler, *Verwaltete Erinnerung – symbolische Politik. Die Heimatsammlungen der deutschen Flüchtlinge, Vertriebenen und Aussiedler*, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, München 2015.
- <sup>9</sup> Activity of East German museums (*ostdeutsche Landesmuseen*) described in: M.I. Sacha, *Muzea utraczonego „niemieckiego Wschodu”. Warunki działania i ewolucja wystaw w kontekście polsko-niemieckim* [Museums of the Lost ‘German East’. The Conditions of Operating and the Evolution of Exhibitions in the Polish-German Context], *Muzealnictwo* 2018, No. 59, pp. 68-78.
- <sup>10</sup> The case of the lack of knowledge of the existence of the German museums among Polish politicians, <https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/politycy-krytykuja-projekt-muzeum-ziem-wschodnich-dawnej-rzeczypospolitej/> [Accessed: 14 April 2018].
- <sup>11</sup> Hubert Orłowski’s concept: *What I call de-forgetting is the process of removing subsequent forgotten or maybe fended off layers of lived events and experiences, conditioned by today’s cognitive interest, a kind of a peculiar horizon of expectations. That horizon can either be a spontaneous state which is born from consecutive phases of an individual life or mere coincidence, as well as the result of a conscious desire and need to mark out a ‘place on the globe’ for oneself. Remembering is a procedure that can be described in laboratory categories of experimental psychology, while de-forgetting is a long-lasting process, interwoven with the present day entanglement of motivations as well as the most contemporary hit at nunc*: H. Orłowski, *Warmia z oddali. Odpominania* [Warmia from Afar. De-forgetting], Borussia, Olsztyn 2000, p. 7.
- <sup>12</sup> CBOS, *Kresowe korzenie Polaków* [Poles’ Roots in the Borderlands], p. 2, online: [https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2012/K\\_050\\_12.PDF](https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2012/K_050_12.PDF) [Accessed: 28 March 2019].
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- <sup>15</sup> M.Głowacka-Grajper, *Transmisja pamięci. Działacze „sfery pamięci” i przekaz o Kresach Wschodnich we współczesnej Polsce* [Transmission of Memory. Activists of the ‘Sphere of Memory’ and the Message on Eastern Borderlands in Contemporary Poland], Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2016, pp. 167-72.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- <sup>17</sup> <http://polonika.pl/institut>
- <sup>18</sup> An example of a well-conceived and unimplemented 2014-18 (?) project of collecting and digitizing data on the heritage of the Eastern Borderlands, [www.kresymuzeum.pl](http://www.kresymuzeum.pl); from the Project’s description: *The Project’s main goal is to make available to the public digitized public information on the heritage of the Borderlands of the Old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, based on dispersed collections amassed in Polish museums, associations, foundations, and collections of private individuals. (...) The Portal is to become the central point for collecting and sharing the largest possible collection of content, information, and 2D and 3D digitized objects related to the heritage of the Borderlands of the former Commonwealth. The resources are to constitute an ordered collection of information on the history of the Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and publicly available; they will subsequently co-create the narrative layer of the eventually planned Museum of the Heritage of the Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* [Accessed: 20 May 2019]. As for the precious initiative to establish the Centre of the Borderlands, inspired by the Scientific Station of the Polish Academy of Learning in Katowice in 2015, it has been rejected in subsequent grant programmes of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education for *financing shortages*.
- <sup>19</sup> Documentation available online: <https://www.bkge.de/Heimatsammlungen/>
- <sup>20</sup> See Portal: Virtual Museums of the Sub-Carpathian Region, <http://wmp.podkarpackie.pl/>
- <sup>21</sup> Proceedings of the Conference were published respectively in 2009 and 2017 in exquisitely illustrated volumes: 1) *Dziedzictwo i pamięć Kresów Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej. Materiały I Muzealnych Spotkań z Kresami zorganizowanych przez Muzeum Niepodległości w Warszawie w dniach 26-27 maja 2008* [Heritage and Memory of the Eastern Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Proceedings from the First Museum Encounters with the Borderlands Organized by the Museum of Independence in Warsaw on 26-27 May 2008], A. Stawarz (ed.), Muzeum Niepodległości, Warszawa 2009; 2) *Dziedzictwo i pamięć Kresów Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej. II Muzealne Spotkania z Kresami* [Heritage and Memory of the Eastern Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Proceedings from the Second Museum Encounters with the Borderlands], T. Skoczek (ed.), Muzeum Niepodległości, Warszawa 2017 (the Conference held on 23-24 May 2011).
- <sup>22</sup> I. Świętosławska, *Znad Niemna, Prypeci i Dniestrze* [From the Land on the Neman, Pripyat, and Dniester Rivers], *Prace i Materiały Muzeum Archeologicznego i Etnograficznego w Łodzi* 1995, Vol. XXX, pp. 157-161; eadem, *Z potrzeby chwili i serca. O powstaniu wystawy „Znad Niemna, Prypeci i Dniestrze”* [On the Spur of the Moment and Out of the Need of the Heart. On the Creation of the ‘From the Land on the Neman, Pripyat, and Dniester Rivers’ Exhibition], in: *Dziedzictwo i pamięć Kresów Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej. Materiały I... ibid.*, pp. 223-26.
- <sup>23</sup> H. Wiórkiewicz, *„Kresy Wschodnie Rzeczypospolitej. Ziemia i ludzie”. Wystawa w Muzeum Niepodległości w Warszawie* [‘Eastern Borderlands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth/Second Polish Republic. Land and People’. Exhibition at the Museum of Independence in Warsaw], *Niepodległość i Pamięć* 1999, No. 6(14), pp. 247-64; online: [http://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media/files/Niepodleglosc\\_i\\_Pamiec/Niepodleglosc\\_i\\_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1\\_\(14\)/Niepodleglosc\\_i\\_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1\\_\(14\)-s247-264/Niepodleglosc\\_i\\_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1\\_\(14\)-s247-264.pdf](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media/files/Niepodleglosc_i_Pamiec/Niepodleglosc_i_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1_(14)/Niepodleglosc_i_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1_(14)-s247-264/Niepodleglosc_i_Pamiec-r1999-t6-n1_(14)-s247-264.pdf) [Accessed: 12 May 2019].
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.
- <sup>25</sup> W. Blacharska, *Kresy II Rzeczypospolitej w wystawiennictwie i zbiorach Muzeum Etnograficznego w Gdańsku-Oliwie* [Edges of the Second Republic of Poland in Exhibitions and Collections of the Ethnographic Museum in Gdansk Oliwa], in: *Dziedzictwo i pamięć Kresów Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej. Materiały I...*, pp. 207-16.
- <sup>26</sup> See: catalogue of the Poznań edition: W. Blacharska, *Co kryły walizki „repatriantów”? Informator wystawy, Muzeum Etnograficzne w Poznaniu, kwiecień–wrzesień 2000* [‘What Did the “Repatriates” Suitcases Hide? Exhibition Guide, Ethnographic Museum in Poznań, April – September 2000], Poznań 2000; catalogue of the Vilnius edition, *Co kryły walizki „repatriantów”? Edycja wileńska* [‘What Did the “Repatriates” Suitcases Hide? Vilnius Edition] / *Księżpė „repatriantų” lagaminai? Vilniausleidimas*, Wilno/Vilnius 2009.
- <sup>27</sup> B. Kubit, *Z Kresów do Gliwic – prezentacja projektu badawczego i wystawy „Gliwicy Kresowanie”* [From the Borderlands to Gliwice: Presentation of the Research Project and the Exhibition ‘Gliwice Borderlanders’], in: *Dziedzictwo i pamięć Kresów Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej. II Muzealne...*, pp. 397-410, online: <http://mbc.cyfrowemazowsze.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=65451&from=publication> [Accessed: 12 May 2019].
- <sup>28</sup> B. Kubit, *Gliwicy Kresowanie* [Gliwice Borderlanders], 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition, Muzeum w Gliwicach, Gliwice 2011, edition with DVD: Exhibition’s and Preview’s documentation.
- <sup>29</sup> Exhibition catalogue, K. Raińska, *Polacy z Kresów Wschodnich na Warmii i Mazurach. Wprowadzenie do wystawy / Poles from the Eastern Borderlands in Warmia and Mazury. Introduction to the Exhibition*, Muzeum Warmii i Mazur, Olsztyn 2011; website of the Spoken History Archives, <http://www.smok.hostil.pl/> (Project completed).

- <sup>30</sup>The 'Poles from the Vilnius Region' Exhibition was accompanied by a modest catalogue (p. 12) with an essay by Krystyna Jarosz.
- <sup>31</sup>In February 2018, the museum changed its name to the Museum of Gdansk.
- <sup>32</sup>The Exhibition 'I Decided to Come to Gdansk Straight Away' was accompanied by a leaflet; Exhibition's video presentation is available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ8A1Bphzj4>
- <sup>33</sup>D. Gonciarz, R. Foltyn, *Osadnictwo Polaków z Wileńszczyzny na Pomorzu Środkowym po 1945 r. Prezentacja kultury ekspatriantów w muzeach pomorskich na początku XXI w.* [Settlement of Poles from the Vilnius Region in Central Pomerania after 1945. Presentation of the Culture of Expatriates in Pomerania's Museums in the Early 21st Century], paper text, (manuscript, p. 19); also D. Gonciarz, *Darstellung der Kultur der Expatrianten aus dem Wilna-Gebiet in pommerschen Museen zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts*, w: *Westpommern / Pomorze Zachodnie – Aspekte der polnischen Nachkriegsgeschichte Pommerns*, G. Lietz (Bearb.), [„Zeitgeschichte regional. Mitteilungen aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ August 2015, Sonderheft 6], Ingo Koch Verlag, Rostock 2015, pp. 68-74.
- <sup>34</sup>D. Gonciarz, R. Foltyn, *ibid.*, p. 15.
- <sup>35</sup>M. Mazur, „*Szli na zachód osadnicy*”: *tożsamość kulturowa ludności przybyłej na Pomorze po 1945 roku* [‘Settlers Were Moving Westwards’. Cultural Identity of the Population Who Arrived in Pomerania after 1945], Muzeum Pomorza Środkowego, Słupsk 2002.
- <sup>36</sup>Museum of Pomeranian Folk Culture in Swołowo, <http://www.muzeum.swolowo.pl/>
- <sup>37</sup>Online: <https://muzeum.szczecin.pl/wystawy/stale/60-hans-stettiner-i-jan-szczeciński-zycie-codziennie-w-szczecinie-w-xx-wieku.html> [Accessed: 27 May 2019].
- <sup>38</sup>B. Kosińska, *Hans Stettiner i Jan Szczeciński. Życie codzienne w Szczecinie w XX wieku. Informator do wystawy w Muzeum Historii Szczecina Oddział Muzeum Narodowego w Szczecinie / Hans Stettiner und Jan Szczeciński. Das alltägliche Leben im Stettin des 20. Jahrhunderts. Begleibuch zur Ausstellung im Muzeum Historii Szczecina Oddział Muzeum Narodowego w Szczecinie* [Hans Stettiner and Jan Szczeciński. Everyday Life in Szczecin in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Guide to the Exhibition at the City History Museum in Szczecin, Branch of the National Museum in Szczecin], Szczecin 2009.
- <sup>39</sup>Website of the Dialogue Center Przełomy in Szczecin, <https://przelomy.muzeum.szczecin.pl/>
- <sup>40</sup>Example of the exhibition organized at the Museum of the Lubusz Region in cooperation with the Silesian House (Haus Schlesien) in Königswinter called 'Strangers in Their Own Houses', preview in November 2018, <http://mzl.zgora.pl/2018/11/28/obcy-w-swoim-domu-wernisaz/> [Accessed: 20 May 2019].
- <sup>41</sup>Website of the Ethnographic Museum in Zielona Góra-Ochla, <https://muzeumochla.pl/>.
- <sup>42</sup>The concept of: 'a wild' museum (*wildes Museum*) makes reference to the 'untamed thought' of Claude Lévi-Strauss. It describes museums founded and run by private individuals (amateurs), often depreciated by classical museology. The notion of 'wild' ('untamed') is not equal with 'primitive' or 'uncivilized', yet it signifies a separate independent non-scientific form of getting to know the world. 'Wild' museums evade strict classification. See: A. Janelli, *Wilde Museen. Zur Museologie des Amateurmuseums*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld 2012, p. 21.
- <sup>43</sup>Information on the Museum of the Eastern Borderlands in Wegliniec, [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muzeum\\_Kres%C3%B3w\\_Wschodnich\\_w\\_W%C4%99gli%C5%84cu](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muzeum_Kres%C3%B3w_Wschodnich_w_W%C4%99gli%C5%84cu) [Accessed: 20 May 2019].
- <sup>44</sup>I. Sobieraj, *Jeszcze Kresowianie...*, p. 54.
- <sup>45</sup>Digital documentation of the 'Gliwice Borderlanders' Exhibition, <http://muzeum.gliwice.pl/wystawa/kresowianie-wirtualnie-czyli-muzeum-w-swiecie-nowoczesnych-technologii>
- <sup>46</sup>Website of the Borderlands' Conference in the Upper Silesian Museum, <http://konferencja.muzeum.bytom.pl/>
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- <sup>48</sup>See different models of participation in a museum exhibition, e.g. online spectator, real spectator, co-operator – A. Piontek, *Museum und Partizipation. Theorie und Praxis kooperativer Ausstellungsprojekte und Beteiligungsangebote*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld 2017, p. 186.
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