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ENTANGLED IN CONTEXTS: TEN YEARS AFTER THE *SIDE BY SIDE* EXHIBITION IN BERLIN'S MARTIN-GROPIUS- BAU

More than 700 objects from nearly 200 collections, 19 exhibition rooms, thousands of visitors – these numbers show the scale of the largest joint Polish – German temporary exhibition to date, titled *Side by Side. Poland – Germany. 1000 Years of Art and History*.¹ Displayed in the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin from September 23, 2011 to January 9, 2012, it comprised works of art dating from the Middle Ages to the early twenty-first century: paintings, graphics, sculptures, old prints, craft objects, installations, and video presentations. They were brought not only from Polish and German museums, but also from collections in France, Great Britain, the United States, Italy, Austria and the Vatican, among others.

The exhibition, coordinated by the Royal Castle in Warsaw and the Martin-Gropius-Bau, was

an event celebrating Poland's assumption of the Presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2011. It provided an opportunity, long planned by the Polish authorities,² to present Polish art in Germany where, surprisingly, it is little known, and set it in the context of the artistic ties between the two nations. High-profile cultural events in the EU member states, organized by the presiding country, are something of a standard. However, *Side by Side* carried an exceptional interpretative potential set in a unique context – that of Polish–German relations, which have undergone constant change, burdened with memories and consequences of conflicts as well as different perspectives on Polish–German and universal history.

The ten years which have passed since the opening of *Side by Side* seem like an entire era in

the relations between both countries – an era of closer and looser ties, of increased cooperation and tensions. The Polish–German political relationship has shifted from a close cooperation to a barely concealed (and sometimes not concealed at all) mutual distance. This has had an impact on official interstate cultural relations. There have been no similarly spectacular joint projects since *Side by Side*. This raises the following questions: Was *Side by Side* an ‘accident at work’? What were the contexts of the creation of the exhibition? Should it be viewed solely through the prism of politics? What artistic and art historical potential does this exhibition hold? Is there any kind of legacy of *Side by Side*?

The Political Context

“Taking up a historical subject is ... a good reason to revise the usual ideas about the history of the Polish–German relations.”³ With these words Anda Rottenberg, the curator of *Side by Side*, described her intentions in creating the exhibition. The division of the exhibition into twenty-two thematic modules located in nineteen rooms of the Martin-Gropius-Bau, however, corresponds to the classical chronological perspective, starting with *The cult of St. Adalbert and the beginnings of neighbourly relations* and ending with *Poland and Germany in a united Europe*. One might therefore get the impression that the exhibition, which was commissioned by politicians, had a cautious framework imposed from above and did not necessarily serve to revise ‘the usual ideas.’ The concept of the exhibition did not deviate from the traditional approach found in permanent exhibitions in art museums: the thematic modules were not broken, for example, by curatorial interventions with works from other periods and indicating the long duration of ideas or their reinterpretations. This was probably because, as Izabela Kowalczyk argues, “the implementation of art projects that are politically inspired and financed with government funds involves extreme caution, and thus the fear of violating taboos or conventions.”⁴

This was explicitly mirrored in an event that took place after the opening of the exhibition: as a result of critical opinion by a member of the German Jewish community, the director of the Martin-Gropius-Bau asked the Polish organizers of *Side by Side* to remove Artur Żmiejewski’s 2000 video *Berek* (The Game of Tag), which shows a contemporary staged game of tag among adult naked people in a room reminiscent of a gas chamber. The German side justified their request with their concern for respect for the victims of the Holocaust.⁵ The withdrawing of the video from the exhibition, interpreted by Kowalczyk as an act of limiting “opportunities for discussion offered by art,”⁶ and by Magdalena Lorenc as a violation of “good museum practices, which assume the protection of the artist and his work,”⁷ namely censorship, is set by Lorenc in yet another context. She describes it as an example of inequality in the Polish–German partnership⁸ and the evidence of the political nature of the compromises forced upon the Poles, who had to adjust their vision to German taboos, which in the case of the Holocaust were much stronger than Polish reactions to it.

Lorenc’s look at *Side by Side* deserves special attention in itself. Though insightful, it is an example of the strong temptation of interpretative reductionism, consisting of attributing the importance of a given phenomenon to only one narrow field – in the case of *Side by Side*, it would be all about the political dimension of the display. Taking a quotation from Walter Benjamin’s *The Arcades Project* as a motto for her reflections on *Side by Side*, Lorenc interprets the exhibition as a “banquet for the past”⁹ thrown when “at any given time, the living see themselves in the midday of history.”¹⁰ From this perspective, *Side by Side* becomes an expression of determinism, something unavoidable and imposed, to some extent artificial and crafted, because it is serving current political purposes. The quote from Benjamin ends, “The historian is the herald who invites the dead to the table,”¹¹ and in this sense, the herald is Anda Rottenberg, the curator of the exhibition.

Lorenc’s reflection on the political nature of *Side by Side* echoes a critical tone towards

the institutionalised control of the exhibition's narrative. As she notes somewhat rightly, the exhibition focused primarily on what unites Poland and Germany, effectively avoiding sensitive topics such as the restitution of Polish cultural assets seized by the Germans during the Second World War,¹² which in the case of an art exhibition takes on a particular dimension and refers to a real contemporary problem in relations between the two countries. Indeed, concentrating on the positive peak moments in Polish–German history is always fraught with the risk of distorting the proportions, not so much of the time, but of the consequences of these relations. Such a narrative serves to create an image of friendly cross-border relations. Culture in the service of international diplomacy therefore assumes that sensitive subjects are not touched upon and that the content and possibilities of discussion are thereby narrowed down.

The Museological and Exhibition

Contexts

Lorenc rightly points out that such a filtered narrative gains an ally in the authority of the museum institution, which legitimises the story in the form of the exhibition.¹³ According to Carol Duncan's diagnosis, the museum space as perceived by visitors can be compared to the space of a temple and a visit to a museum or a gallery is supposed to evoke an effect of humility similar to that experienced by a viewer in a ritualised sacred space.¹⁴ According to this interpretation, most visitors would therefore not question the content of the exhibition. Symptomatically, this view was reflected much more openly in the German reviews of *Side by Side* than in the Polish ones,¹⁵ which may confirm the argument about the persistence of different perspectives on the contemporary reference points in the relations between the two countries.

Lorenc's interpretation of *Side by Side*, reduced to a political dimension, has omitted important contexts and trivialised others. One of them is the museological context of the exhibition,

which cannot be treated solely as a manifestation of a politicised relational discourse in which objects engage in dialogue with one another only to confirm preconceived theses.¹⁶ Such a methodological approach in exhibiting has, after all, its roots in the beginnings of conscious collection-building back at least in the early modern period.¹⁷ The cultivation of discourse by exhibitions and museums has intensified with the entry of modernist art forms, commenting on current events, into exhibition spaces, especially after the Second World War. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, discursivity became the norm also in the case of exhibition phenomena based mainly on historical content.¹⁸ This is due to the popularity of narrative exhibitions (although not only), which use clear theses and a precise vision of the history they present. Although the creators of such exhibitions are seldom objective in their work, these displays are precisely part of a broader discourse – but this means that it is possible to argue with them, as Rottenberg herself suggests in her introduction to the catalogue of *Side by Side*: “Each of us remembers Polish–German history from history lessons and carries certain ideas about it in their hearts. For many, this [exhibition] will be a cause for criticism and dissatisfaction.”¹⁹ Today in Poland, exhibitions in museums and galleries, either permanent or temporary, narrative or traditional, are one of the most important axes of public debate on the politics of remembrance, as has been shown in recent years by the disputes over the ideological profiles of, among others, the Warsaw Rising Museum, the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the European Solidarity Centre or the Museum of the Second World War.

Lorenc's critical remark about the heterogeneity of objects displayed in *Side by Side*, which she calls ‘art-not-art’ (Polish *sztuka-nie-sztuka*),²⁰ and the alleged interpretative problems resulting from this, seem similarly misguided; she claims that “other categories are adequate for the study of practices used in the presentation of art, and others for the construction of ethnographic exhibitions.”²¹ In the case of *Side by Side*, the trivializing term “art-not-art” applies to: 250

works of painting, 30 sculptures, 60 old prints, 80 manuscripts, 60 graphics, 60 documents, 100 craft objects, 150 photographs, films, modern books, and sound recordings.²² However, it should be taken into account that the idea of juxtaposing works of art with objects of everyday use within one exhibition is not new either. What is more, it is not reserved for the aforementioned narrative exhibitions, which willingly use such an approach, treating the exhibit as a source of narration or as an element supporting the narration. The non-heterogeneity of *Side by Side* would not therefore have been unprecedented and surprising at the time of its opening. Anyway, in Germany, where museums and exhibitions seem to be more conservative in terms of convention than in Poland, such displays had already existed – like the permanent exhibition *Deutsche Geschichte in Bildern und Zeugnissen* (German History in Images and Testimonies) at the German Historical Museum in Berlin, opened in 2006 and presenting an extremely eclectic set of objects almost exclusively in showcases and without additional scenography.

A separate issue is setting *Side by Side* in the context of the presence of Polish themes in exhibitions in German museums and galleries. This issue should be divided into two: permanent and temporary presentations, as they also function in partially different contexts. What might Germans learn about Poland and Poles in their museums? It seems that *Side by Side* actually gave German audiences the opportunity to learn about Polish material heritage on a large scale for the first time. As Tobias Weger notes “for decades, Poland was completely absent as a subject of exhibitions organised in West Germany, although also in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), despite official declarations of ‘friendship between nations’ and ‘international solidarity,’ the situation was not much better. The absence of one of the largest and most populous neighbouring countries in German museums and exhibitions can be seen as a symptom of a long tradition of marginalisation or even erasure of Poland and Poles from the German collective consciousness.”²³ These words, written by a German scholar, are particularly meaningful, as they confirm that Germans themselves notice the

problem of their minimal interest in their eastern neighbour.

Although the history of a permanent Polish presence on German soil dates back to the Middle Ages, and the Polish diaspora, estimated at as much as two million people, is the second largest one in Germany,²⁴ there is only one museum dedicated to the Polish diaspora in this country – the Kraszewski Museum in Dresden, located in the former residence once belonging to the Polish writer Józef Ignacy Kraszewski. References to Poland can be found in exhibitions mainly in local museums. Thus, in the castle of Rastatt in Baden-Württemberg, there is an exhibition commemorating the freedom movements in Germany from the Middle Ages to the present day, whose narrative also includes the thread of Polish immigrants participating in those movements. Bavaria’s Schleißheim Castle houses the Gertrud Weinhold Ecumenical Collection, a private collection of Christian art, including religious folk art from Poland. Similar works can be found, for example, in Berlin’s Museum of European Cultures, but, as Weger notes, they do not “add any political value to the complicated German–Polish relations.”²⁵ Similarly marginal are the mentions of Poland and Poles in historical museums – in the aforementioned German Historical Museum or in the new permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum in Berlin (where Poland appears to a limited extent mainly in the context of the Holocaust).

The situation is somewhat different when it comes to temporary exhibitions. The first decade of the twenty-first century saw several presentations of Polish–German relations as part of major historical, and often international, exhibitions in Germany. One of them, *Europas Mitte um 1000* (The Centre of Europe around 1000), toured several Central European cities, including Kraków and Berlin, between 2000 and 2002. It was created under the auspices of the Council of Europe to mark the anniversary of the so-called Congress of Gniezno, a meeting in 1000 between Emperor Otto III and Polish Duke Bolesław I the Brave at the tomb of St. Adalbert. The exhibition’s aim was to draw parallels between the unifying trends in Europe 1000

years ago and the process of integration into the European Union on the eve of the accession of the Central and East European countries in 2004. A few years later, at the turn of 2005 and 2006, another exhibition created by the Museum Europäischer Kulturen in Berlin, *Polenbegeisterung. Deutsche und Polen nach dem Novemberaufstand 1830* (Polish Enthusiasm: Germans and Poles after the 1830 November Uprising), focused on Polish–German relations in the context of the November Uprising, a Polish rebellion against the Russians, and its aftermath. *Deutsche und Polen– 1.9.39 – Abgründe und Hoffnungen* (Germans and Poles 1.9.39: Abyss and Hope) of 2009 was in turn an exhibition presented at the Deutsches Historisches Museum in connection with the 70th anniversary of the German invasion of Poland. Another noteworthy exhibition was *My, Berlińczycy/Wir, Berliner* (We, the Berliners) in 2009, a presentation of the history of Polish presence in the German capital, organised by the Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin in the local Fohreim Palaca and the Märkisches Museum. To this should be added the impressive but not faultless international exhibition *Europa Jagellonica. Art and Culture of Central Europe under the Jagiellonians 1386–1572*, presented in 2012 in Warsaw, Potsdam, and Kutná Hora in the Czech Republic; this project aimed to consolidate the positive narrative of the medieval roots of European integration on the example of the reign of the Central European Jagiellonian dynasty.

A somewhat different issue is the German exhibitions on the wartime and post-war displacement of German citizens from the Third Reich's eastern territories taken over by Poland and the Soviet Union in 1945. In the name of good relations with the communist-ruled Polish People's Republic and the USSR this topic was not officially raised in the GDR, but in West Germany such exhibitions began to appear as early as the beginning of the fifties, and at least ten of them were organised there by the end of the eighties.²⁶ At the time in Poland, due to the taboo surrounding the past of the formerly German territories, these exhibitions did not evoke a response, but those

created after the fall of communism in 1989 already created fertile ground for tension in this regard, especially in the context of the activities of the German revisionist Bund der Vertriebenen (Federation of the Expelled). The message of these exhibitions was not uniform; some focused on the injustice that met Germans in political and material terms, others concentrated rather on the loss of cultural assets. In response Poland has organised a number of exhibitions showing the losses of the Polish heritage as a result of the German invasion and occupation during the Second World War.²⁷

The Artistic Context

Among the multiplying contexts in which *Side by Side* is entangled, perhaps the least discussed is the one concerning the artistic value of the exhibition and the image of Polish art in relation to German art that would emerge from this presentation. It seems that the diagnosis is brutally honest for Polish art: from the Middle Ages until the late nineteenth century, it stood in relation to German art, and not the other way round. Wherever artistic circles from both countries came into contact, it was Polish artists who drew technical, formal, and often thematic, inspiration from their German counterparts. The predominance and attractiveness of German art resulted from a number of conditions that were not explicitly discussed at the exhibition and need to be expanded upon. Unlike the Polish lands, the wealthy German countries were located at the junction of the South and North European artistic tradition, which meant that German artists had much broader access to the rich cultural heritage dating back to antiquity. Thanks to generous patronage, not only by monarchs and aristocrats, but also by the bourgeoisie (which in Poland was practically meaningless until the nineteenth century), workshops and later institutionalised art education were of a high standard. Territorial proximity and close political and economic ties with Western, Northern and Southern Europe allowed Germany to quickly absorb and adapt trends that would only reach Poland after a lengthy delay. German

art produced artists appreciated in Europe, such as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach the Elder and the Younger, Hans Holbein, or Caspar David Friedrich, who were role models for local and foreign artists. The phenomenon of the predominance of German art over Polish art lasted practically uninterrupted until the second half of the nineteenth century; at *Side by Side*, it was visible mainly in the form of Polish works of craft, sculpture, and graphics, almost entirely influenced by German models or made by Germans on Polish soil.

On the other hand, in the history of art there are not many examples – and in fact there were none at the exhibition – of the opposite trend, and it was only during the late period of the Partitions (i.e. the period from 1795 to 1918 when the Polish state was dissolved and its territory annexed by Prussia, Austria and Russia) that some Polish painters who attended art schools in Munich and Vienna managed to spread new skills comparable to those of the West and put them at the service of patriotic art, more or less openly opposing the domination of the partitioning powers (*The Prussian Homage*, the 1882 large-scale painting by Jan Matejko, was an example of this approach at the exhibition.) At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some Polish artists were active in the circles of Berlin's international artistic bohemia, becoming part of an increasingly transnational artistic circuit, and in the interwar period Polish and German artists were similarly eager to become involved in new avant-garde movements spreading throughout Europe. The striking difference between Polish and German art at the time, shown at the exhibition, was the involvement of a number of Polish artists in the efforts promoted by the Polish authorities to develop a 'national style' for the newly reborn state, mixing patterns of traditional folk and modernist art and blurring the influence of the former partitioners.

When taking up the subject of Polish–German relations, post-war Polish art served primarily as a means of working through trauma: on the one hand as material for rebuilding Polish dignity after the wartime humiliations suffered from the Germans, on the other as a tool for vivisection of the damaged collective psyche and

an attempt to understand the essence of evil that cannot be understood. With the passing of time, as subsequent generations came to speak, another trend was added: the reinterpretation of the meaning of the Second World War and the image of Germans in the Polish culture. This was done especially through conceptual art. A lot of space was dedicated to it at *Side by Side*. A natural reaction is to ask about the originality of these activities in terms of form and content. It seems that during the communist period their 'exciting underground' status²⁸ required the artists to be more creative in smuggling critical, often anti-German content in defiance of the policy of the communist authorities, who tried to avoid explicitness towards the brotherly GDR. However, the form of those works of art itself did not differ significantly from what could be found in the Western art world at the time, which was also evident at *Side by Side*. Despite the Iron Curtain, Polish art, more than that of other Eastern Bloc countries, showed a surprising absorption of Western trends,²⁹ which gave the Western audience an easier insight into the messages of works created in communist Poland. A similar trend after the fall of communism has no longer had this quality of exoticism; it is not surprising that the art of the post-communist countries in the period of transformation, in the pursuit of adaptation to the West and in the globalizing world of art, became more visible and accessible,³⁰ but less specific.³¹ Post-1989 Polish artists have to a large extent either distanced themselves from the experiences that shaped them,³² or have continually reworked them.

The works of those who reworked those experiences, such as Krzysztof Wodiczko, Piotr Uklański, and Mirosław Bałka, whose aforementioned video was removed from *Side by Side*, are part of the recent Polish–German cultural relations in the field of exhibition. According to Izabela Kowalczyk, "before 1989, attempts at establishing mutual (Polish–German artistic) relations were mainly initiated by the artists themselves."³³ Today, they are predominantly official and institutionalised, embedded in the system of grants and artist residencies on both sides of the border. Polish art is promoted in Germany, e.g., by

the Polish Institutes in Berlin and Leipzig, but they were and still are:

mainly aimed at making up for the previous absence of the [Polish] art in [Germany] and at familiarising the German audience with the youngest generation of Polish artists. They have taken up subjects such as the fall of communism, the process of the European unification, the unabsorbed memory of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, the Polish perception of Germans as enemies, and have asked questions about the freedom and the inclusion of Polish art in the canon of European art.³⁴

An extensive list of these exhibitions is presented by Kowalczyk in her text about visual arts in the Polish–German iconosphere,³⁵ and there is no need to list them here. Suffice to say that from an artistic point of view, *Side by Side* definitely fits in with the phenomenon described by Kowalczyk.

The Context of the Present and the Future

Did *Side by Side* leave behind anything that could be called its legacy? Did it set a direction or a trend in artistic and cultural relations between Poland and Germany? Ten years after the exhibition, one cannot see any deliberate reference to it in the current cultural landscape. Polish cultural diplomacy has shifted its focus from emphasising what is common to both nations to promoting content that had hitherto been overlooked and to educating Germans about the damage they caused to Poland during the Second World War.³⁶ It thus reflects a progressive trend in Poland to develop historical rather than artistic or art-historical exhibitions, as represented in *Side by Side*.

In this respect, the dominant role has been taken over by the Pilecki Institute in Berlin, an educational and exhibition branch of the Warsaw institution of the same name, located in the very

heart of the German capital, right next to the Brandenburg Gate. The patron of the institution and the main character of the biographical exhibition it houses is Witold Pilecki, a Polish officer active during the Second World War in revealing the truth about the Holocaust, a voluntary prisoner of the German death camp in Auschwitz, and after the war a victim of communist persecution. For the current authorities in Poland, Pilecki is a symbol of the restoration of the memory of national heroes forgotten or marginalized for years. As a model of resistance against the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, the Institute aims to function as a warning to the Germans not to forget their criminal past. The exhibition in the Pilecki Institute in Berlin, which includes objects connected with the Holocaust, contains a strong emotional charge. It is also the basis of the educational programme of the Institute, which, by organising classes for German schools, takes it as a point of honour to fill the alleged gap in the Germans' knowledge of the Polish victims of the Second World War.

Such an approach, however, ignores something that, regardless of political overtones, resonated strongly in *Side by Side* – namely the broadly understood aspect of Polish culture and art, which goes beyond the disputes concerning the evaluation of the moral attitudes of Germans and Poles in the previous century. In this sense, Germany lacks if not a permanent, then at least an occasional counterbalance – a reminder of Polish culture on a larger scale. The small and not too active Polish Institutes in Berlin and Leipzig do not fulfil their role in this respect, and the memorials and research centres dedicated to the Polish victims of the Second World War, announced by the German authorities,³⁷ remain a part of the aforementioned discourse on the tragic twentieth-century history. The recent proposals to create a major museum of Polish–German relations, displaying the whole spectrum of bi-national history, are only an idea at the moment.³⁸ It is hard to imagine that such a museum could omit art and other aspects of culture. However, it seems that it will still be a long time before, or rather if, the legacy of *Side by Side* in Germany takes on a material shape.

Notes

¹ The exhibition had a Polish and a German title, each of a slightly different meaning. The Polish one was *Obok. Polska – Niemcy. 1000 lat historii w sztuce*, which translates: Nearby. Poland – Germany. 1000 Years of History in Art. The German title was: *Tür an Tür. Polen – Deutschland. 1000 Jahre in Kunst und Geschichte*, meaning: Door to Door. Poland – Germany. 1000 Years in Art and History. The English title used in this article comes from *Culture.pl*, the Polish online portal of the state-funded Adam Mickiewicz Institute; see: <https://culture.pl/en/event/side-by-side-poland-germany-1000-years-of-art-and-history>. Unless stated otherwise, other titles or quotations from non-English sources were translated by me into English.

² Magdalena Lorenc, “Obok. Polska – Niemcy. 1000 lat historii w sztuce jako przykład wystawy politycznej,” *Przegląd Politologiczny / Political Science Review*, no. 2 (2013): 168.

³ Anda Rottenberg, “Wprowadzenie,” in *Obok. Polska – Niemcy. 1000 lat historii w sztuce*, edited by Małgorzata Omilanowska (Köln: DuMont Buchverlag, 2011), 21.

⁴ Izabela Kowalczyk, “Sztuki wizualne w przestrzeni polsko-niemieckiej,” in *Interakcje. Leksykon komunikowania polsko-niemieckiego*, edited by Alfred Gall, et al. (Wrocław: Oficyna Wydawnicza ATUT – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, 2015), 379.

⁵ Lorenc, *Obok. Polska – Niemcy*, 169.

⁶ Kowalczyk, “Sztuki wizualne w przestrzeni polsko-niemieckiej,” 379.

⁷ Lorenc, *Obok. Polska – Niemcy*, 169.

⁸ *Ibidem*, 170.

⁹ *Ibidem*, 163. The fragment of the motto quoted from the American edition: Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, translated by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1999), 481.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 481.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Lorenc, *Obok. Polska – Niemcy*, 174.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 170.

¹⁴ Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995), 7-20.

¹⁵ Two selected reviews of *Side by Side* may serve as a quintessence of the different attitudes: the German one by Burkhard Steppacher and the Polish one by Joanna Ruszczak. See: Burkhard Steppacher, “Nachbarn in Europa – Tür an Tür. Deutsch-polnische Beziehungen kunstvoll vermittelt,” *Die Politische Meinung. Monatsschrift zu Fragen der Zeit*, no. 506/507 (2012): 125.: “Much has changed in German–Polish relations over the past 20 years. In a free, democratic Europe, Germans and Poles can now shape their future as partners together with other Europeans. The exhibition leaves the visitor with a critical, sharpened, but also optimistic outlook.” Joanna Ruszczak, “Obok. Tysiąc lat polsko-niemieckiej historii,” *Newsweek Polska* published electronically 17.10.2011 <https://www.newsweek.pl/obok-polska-niemcy-recenzja-wystawy/9gftw58>, accessed 27.07.2022. “... the last stage of Polish–German history seems to be the most important – it is, after all, an exhibition of political significance, the most important cultural event of the Polish Presidency of the EU. That is why one can get the impression that those moments in history when there was a spark between neighbours are not emphasised particularly strongly.”

¹⁶ Lorenc, *Obok. Polska – Niemcy*, 171-72.

¹⁷ Dorota Folga-Januszewska, “Muzeum i narracja: długa historia opowieści,” in *Muzeum i zmiana. Losy muzeów narracyjnych*, ed. Paweł Kowal and Karolina Wolska-Pabian (Kraków-Warszawa: Universitas-Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, 2019), 19-27.

¹⁸ Paweł Kowal, “Społeczny, cywilizacyjny i polityczny kontekst polskiego boomu muzealnego,” *ibidem* (2019), 46.

¹⁹ Rottenberg, “Wprowadzenie,” 21.

²⁰ Lorenc, *Obok. Polska – Niemcy*, 164.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 164-65.

²² “Obok. Polska – Niemcy. 1000 lat historii w sztuce,” accessed 27.07.2022, <http://mkidn.gov.pl/pages/posts/obok.-polska-ndash-niemcy.-1000-lat-historii-w-sztuce-2310.php>.

²³ Tobias Weger, “Muzea i wystawy,” in *Interakcje. Leksykon komunikowania polsko-niemieckiego*, edited by Alfred Gall, et al. (Wrocław: Oficyna Wydawnicza ATUT – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, 2015), 628–29.

²⁴ “Polacy i Polonia w Niemczech,” accessed 27.07.2022, <https://www.gov.pl/web/niemcy/polacy-i-polonia-w-niemczech>.

²⁵ Weger, “Muzea i wystawy,” 621.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 623.

²⁷ Recently, there have been many such presentations in Poland, just to mention a few: the series of exhibitions *Utracone/Odzyskane* (Lost/Recovered) in the Kordegarda Gallery of the National Cultural Centre in Warsaw (since 2015), *Dziela utracone* (Lost Masterpieces) in the Museum of Independence in Warsaw (2019), *Utracone oblicza* (Lost Faces) – an outdoor exhibition in Warsaw (2020), and *Cenne... Zagrabione... Utracone?* (Precious... Looted... Lost?) at the Museum of Landed Gentry in Dobrzyca (2020).

²⁸ Wojciech Włodarczyk, “Sztuka Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej i Polski,” in *Sztuka świata*, edited by Wojciech Włodarczyk (Warszawa: Arkady, 2006), 213-14.

²⁹ Anda Rottenberg, *Sztuka w Polsce 1945-2005* (Warszawa: Stentor, 2005), 103.

³⁰ David Hopkins, *After-Modern Art 1945–2017* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 217.

- ³¹ Rottenberg, *Sztuka w Polsce 1945-2005*, 322, 39.
- ³² Włodarczyk, "Sztuka Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej i Polski," 241.
- ³³ Kowalczyk, "Sztuki wizualne w przestrzeni polsko-niemieckiej," 375.
- ³⁴ *Ibidem*, 379.
- ³⁵ *Ibidem*, 379–86.
- ³⁶ This can be seen in the recent interviews with and articles by the managers of the Pilecki Institute in Berlin, Hanna Radziejowska and Mateusz Falkowski, published in the German press; see: Jan Puhl, "Die Deutschen wissen fast nichts," *Der Spiegel*, published electronically 30.04.2021, accessed 27.07.2022, <https://www.spiegel.de/geschichte/pilecki-institut-zur-geschichte-polens-die-deutschen-wissen-fast-nichts-a-74ab712f-8177-4451-bba9-f85a5a046889>; Mateusz Falkowski, "Über polnisches Kulturgut, das die Nazis geraubt haben, wird kaum diskutiert," *Berliner Zeitung*, published electronically 9.05.2021, accessed 27.07.2022, <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/wochenende/ueber-polnisches-kulturgut-das-die-nazis-geraubt-haben-wird-kaum-diskutiert-li.157364?pid=true>.
- ³⁷ Anna Widzyk, "Bundestag za centrum upamiętnienia ofiar niemieckiej okupacji w Europie," *Deutsche Welle*, published electronically 9.11.2020, accessed 27.07.2022, <https://www.dw.com/pl/bundestag-za-centrum-upami%C4%99nienia-ofiar-niemieckiej-okupacji-w-europie/a-55219334>.
- ³⁸ Wolfram Meyer zu Utrup, "Hallo Nachbar, dzień dobry," *Der Tagesspiegel*, published electronically 7.04.2019, accessed 27.07.2022, <https://causa.tagesspiegel.de/politik/wie-gedenkt-man-der-deutsch-polnischen-geschichte/hallo-nachbar-dziennbspdobrynbsp.html>.

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