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**Material Feelings: Population Displacement and Property Transfer in
Modern Europe and Beyond**

Place: Leibniz-Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Europa (GWZO), Leipzig

Organisers: Kornelia Kończal (Hannah Arendt Institute, TU Dresden) and Ewa Stańczyk (Department of History, University of Amsterdam); in cooperation with: Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel (Aleksander-Brückner-Zentrum für Polenstudien at the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg) and Stefan Troebst (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO), Leipzig)

Date: 24.05.2018 - 25.05.2018

This two-day workshop opened on 24 May 2018 with a keynote by Alice von Bieberstein (Cambridge University, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin). The lecture entitled “Of trees and treasures” explored the practice of contemporary “treasure hunting” for Armenian property in Eastern Turkey. Using an ethnographic approach, von Bieberstein explored the precarious position of Kurdish treasure hunters who engage in the practice and whose daily lives are pervaded with materiality, genocide, and memory. The session, chaired by Elisabeth Gallas (Dubnow Institute, Leipzig), provided an interesting starting point for an interdisciplinary discussion on property, emotions, displacement and belonging.

This was followed by a panel, titled *Affective Regimes of Ownership*, chaired by Stefan Troebst (University of Leipzig), with a commentary provided by Kerstin Brückweh (Center for Contemporary History, Potsdam). The first paper by Olga Sezneva (University of Amsterdam) “Materiality, Dispossession and Emotions in Koenigsberg/Kaliningrad” adopted a mixed ethnographic-sociological approach, focusing on objects that were looted in Kaliningrad immediately after World War II. The author argued that preserving those objects (and the emotions that came with it) could be seen as a way of replicating the official narrative of the annexation of Kaliningrad as a “triumph” and upholding the collective identity which emerged from it. The second and final paper in this panel: “Collective memory, moral economy and land disputes after repatriation of Crimean Tatars” by Olena Sobolieva (National Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Kyiv) looked at the spontaneous repatriation of Crimean Tatars which took place at the beginning of 21st century. The author showed that in the absence of the original property, which had been confiscated during the earlier wave of expulsions, the returnees strove to restore the moral economy of the previous decades by acquiring land and building new houses in the vicinity of their original property.

The second and last session of the day, *Exhibiting Material Feelings*, was chaired by Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel (Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg), with a commentary provided by Ljerka Dulibić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb). The panel was opened by Jakub Gawkowski (CEU Budapest) with a paper “Displaying the Loss of the National Heritage on the Example of Warszawa”. The speaker explored two exhibitions *Warszawa Oskarża* (Warsaw Accuses) organized in the National Museum in Warsaw in 1945, which consisted of damaged objects and was aimed at showcasing the material damage sustained under Nazi occupation, and *The Exhibition of Saved Jewish Art* from 1949. Both

case studies enabled Gawkowski to reflect on a wider shift in the approach to objects (i.e. objects as storytellers), visible in museum practices after World War II. This was followed by “Trinkets and Magpie’s Treasures: Material Objects in Dubravka Ugrešić’s *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*”, a paper in literary studies by Sanja Ivanov (University of Toronto). Ivanov showed how Ugrešić’s preoccupation with objects is yet one more way of reflecting on the socialist past but in a way that often depersonalizes and moves away from commemorating the daily life under communism.

The two panels were followed by a dinner discussion. The day concluded with a presentation of the project TransCultAA: Transfer of Cultural Objects in the Alpe Adria Region in the 20th Century (<https://www.transcultaa.eu>) by Ljerka Dulibić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb).

On the second and final day, 25 May, the workshop opened with a panel *Personalizing Dispossessed Objects* chaired by Ewa Stańczyk (University of Amsterdam), with a commentary by the chair. The first paper by Cathleen M. Giustino (Auburn University) “Emotions of a Dispossessor in the Bohemian Borderlands: The Passion and Fury of Josef Scheybal before and after 1945” looked at individuals engaged in the securing of German property following the post-World War II expulsions from Czechoslovakia. Here Scheybal’s function as the government official responsible for protecting the confiscated property was conflated with his life-long passion for collecting objects. The second paper by Aneta Stępień (The University of Dublin, Trinity College Dublin) “Strangeness and resentment in Poland’s post-German territories” focused on literary representations of formerly German objects which were appropriated by Polish settlers who came to inhabit those territories following the deportations and who in times of post-war scarcity were often forced to “make do” with other people’s things. Finally, Natasa Simeunović Bajić’s (University of Belgrade) “Colonization of rural Vojvodina – facts, representation and family emotions” looked at similar processes in the context of contemporary Vojvodina.

The final panel of the workshop, *Objects and Homemaking*, chaired by Kornelia Kończal (Hannah Arendt Institute, TU Dresden), with a commentary by Maruška Svašek (Queen's University Belfast), featured two speakers. First, Anna Holzer-Kawalko’s (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) “Home Away From Home? Polish Expellees and German Property in Lower Silesia, 1945-1947” looked at different ways of appropriating property (including looting) in the former German territories of Lower Silesia and the homemaking practices that were anchored in those very objects. Second, Marko Milosev’s (Historical Society of Kikinda, Serbia) „Remembering home – Old and new tenants of the Jewish property in Banat” focused on those Jews who survived the Holocaust and left Yugoslavia after World War II, being forced to leave their property behind. Their memories and the memories of those who settled in their homes formed the basis of this paper.

The workshop was concluded by the two organizers, Kornelia Kończal and Ewa Stańczyk, who reflected on the two days’ proceedings. Several points were raised, e.g. the interdisciplinarity of the workshop and the possibilities and pitfalls that came with the triangulation of material studies, the study of displacement and the study of emotions. The organizers pointed out disciplinary differences in the approach to objects and posed wider questions about “material feelings” - the working category of the workshop.

Workshop Overview:

24 May 2018

12.30-13.15: Arrival, registration and finger food lunch

13.15-13.30: Welcome and introduction:

Stefan Troebst (GWZO Leipzig)

Kornelia Kończal (Hannah Arendt Institute, TU Dresden)

Ewa Stańczyk (University of Amsterdam)

13.30-15.00: Keynote and discussion:

Alice von Bieberstein (Institute for Advanced Study, Berlin): In Search for Trees and Treasures

Chair: Elisabeth Gallas (Dubnow Institute, Leipzig)

15.00-15.30: Coffee break

15.30-17.00: Affective Regimes of Ownership

Chair: Stefan Troebst (GWZO Leipzig)

Olga Sezneva (University of Amsterdam): Pride and Property: Emotions, Justice and the Changing Regimes of Ownership in Kaliningrad, the Former Königsberg

Olena Sobolieva (National Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Kyiv): Collective Memory, Moral Economy and Land Disputes after Repatriation of Crimean Tatars

Comment: Kerstin Brückweh (Center for Contemporary History, Potsdam)

17.00-17.30: Coffee break

17.30-19.00: Exhibiting Material Feelings

Chair: Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel (Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg)

Jakub Gawkowski (CEU Budapest): Displaying the Loss of the National Heritage on the Example of Warszawa Oskarża [Warsaw is Accusing] Exhibition in the National Museum in Warsaw (1945)

Sanja Ivanov (University of Toronto): Trinkets and Magpie's Treasures: Material Objects in Dubravka Ugrešić's The Museum of Unconditional Surrender

Comment: Ljerka Dulibić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb)

19.30: Dinner

After-dinner presentation of the project TransCultAA: Transfer of Cultural Objects in the Alpe Adria Region in the 20th Century (<https://www.transcultaa.eu>) by Ljerka Dulibić (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb)

25 May 2018

9.00-11.00: Personalizing Dispossessed Objects

Chair: Ewa Stańczyk (University of Amsterdam)

Cathleen M. Giustino (Auburn University): Emotions of a Dispossessor in the Bohemian Borderlands: The Passion and Fury of Josef Scheybal before and after 1945

Aneta Stępień (Trinity College Dublin): Strangeness and Resentment in Poland's Post-German Territories

Natasa Simeunović Bajić (University of Belgrade): Colonization of Rural Vojvodina – Facts, Representation and Family Emotions

Comment: Ewa Stańczyk (University of Amsterdam)

11.00-11.30: Coffee break

11.30-13.30: Objects and Homemaking

Chair: Kornelia Kończal (Hannah Arendt Institute, TU Dresden)

Marko Milosev (Historical Society of Kikinda, Serbia): Remembering Home – Old and New Tenants of the Jewish property in Banat

Anna Holzer-Kawalko (Hebrew University of Jerusalem): Home Away from Home? Polish Expellees and German Property in Lower Silesia, 1945-1947

Comment: Maruška Svašek (Queen's University Belfast)

13.30-14.30: Final discussion over lunch