



**Report on the activities
of the Museum of the Second
World War in 2015**



Museum of the Second World War

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*Professor Paweł Machcewicz, director of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk.
Photo: Renata Dąbrowska/Agencja Gazeta.*

Creation of a historical museum is incomparably more complicated than building a stadium, railway station, airport, or motorway. It starts with a concept that should specify why another museum is needed at all, what it should discuss, and what it should present. In the case of the Museum of the Second World War everything began with a sketch, about a dozen pages long, which our team then developed into detailed scripts for the individual parts of the permanent exhibition. We then organised contests for the exhibition scenography and the architectural design. From then on historians and museologists have worked in cooperation with scenographers and architects, translating ideas and historic facts into the future shape of our exhibition and building. Simultaneously, we were – and still are – collecting thousands of exhibits, which should constitute the core of every genuine historical exhibition.

Paradoxically, this enormous volume of work of dozens of people remained invisible from the outside for a long time, until the launch of the construction, when words and visions finally began to be transformed into thousands of tonnes of concrete and steel. Gradually, all the dimensions of that work become one when the first outlines of the exhibition and the first exhibits appeared at the construction site, which in the case of our Museum was in 2015. This is the greatest reward for those engaged in its creation for the last couple of years.

Inside the building are the walls of the main exhibition rooms and the largest exhibits, such as tanks, a train wagon, and a torpedo, which had to be put in place before closing the ceiling. In the months to come the construction works and the installation of the entire exhibition shall be completed. We hope that soon we shall welcome those who are the most important in this whole enterprise, for whom this museum is being created: the first visitors.

Paweł Machcewicz
Director of the Museum of the Second World War



Important events of 2015



15 January

First exhibits at the construction site of the Museum of the Second World War



12 February

"Routes of Liberation. European Legacies of the Second World War" exhibition opens in Warsaw

31 March

"Meetings with History" – promotion of the book *Polacy w obwodzie wołogodzkiem* [Poles in the Vologda Oblast]



19 April

"Operation Tempest" historical re-enactment



6–7 May

"The Legacy of the Second World War from a 70-Year Perspective" international conference of historians



12 May

"Meetings with History" – promotion of Anna Zapalec's book *Druga strona sojuszu* [The other side of the alliance]



16 May

European Night of Museums on Westerplatte



30 January

Promotion of the book *Wojna na Kaszubach* [War in Kashubia] at the History Meeting House in Warsaw

19 February

"Yalta – Reality, Myth, and Memory" scientific conference, co-organized by the Museum



4 March

"Routes of Liberation. European Legacies of the Second World War" exhibition opens in Gdańsk



26 April

Album *Codziennosc w cieniu terroru* [Everyday Life in The Shadow of Terror] receives an award in the 2014 "Sybilla" competition



6 May

Opening of the exhibition titled "45. End of the War in 45 artefacts"

14 May

"Żuławy in 1945. The People and Their Stories" academic conference opens in Malbork



20–22 May

Second festival of totalitarian propaganda films



15–17 May

"The Explosion" performance at Westerplatte

22 May

Workshop "A Cross from Taiga. In a Conservator's Workshop" within the framework of the Baltic Festival of Science

6 May

Signing of the contract for the execution of the permanent exhibition of the Museum



7 May

Representatives of European countries visit the "45. End of the War in 45 artefacts" exhibition



30 May

Historical Picnic in Białoleka



16 June

"Meetings with History" – promotion of Marcin Westphal's book *Walka o panowanie w głębinach* [Struggle for domination in the depths]



2 September

Meeting of the Advisory Board



6 June

Fourth Łabiszyn Meetings with History



6 July

13th rally in the footsteps of Major 'Łupaszko's soldiers



27 September

"Operation N" outdoor game in Nowy Port



10 June

Meeting of the Museum's Board of Trustees



1 September

Open day at the Museum construction site



8 October

Promotion of Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak's book *Świadcstwa Zagłady. Obóz w Chełmnie nad Nerem. Getto wiejskie Czachulec* [Holocaust testimonies. The extermination centre in Chełmno nad Nerem. Czachulec rural ghetto]



15 October

"Meetings with History" – promotion of Pavel Polian's book *Wbrew ich woli* [Against their will]



17 October

Conference "Concentration Camps in the Third Reich. In Memory of the Victims" opens at the Sachsenhausen Memorial Site and Museum



12 November

First Congress of Scholars of the Pro-independence Underground held in Toruń



18 November

"The Soldiers' Fate" exhibition opens in Wieluń



21 November

Presentation of the "Alert for the City!" game at the Fun and Games Fair



28 November

Debate "Between Resistance and Indifference" in Gdańsk



10 December

Topping-out ceremony at the Museum building



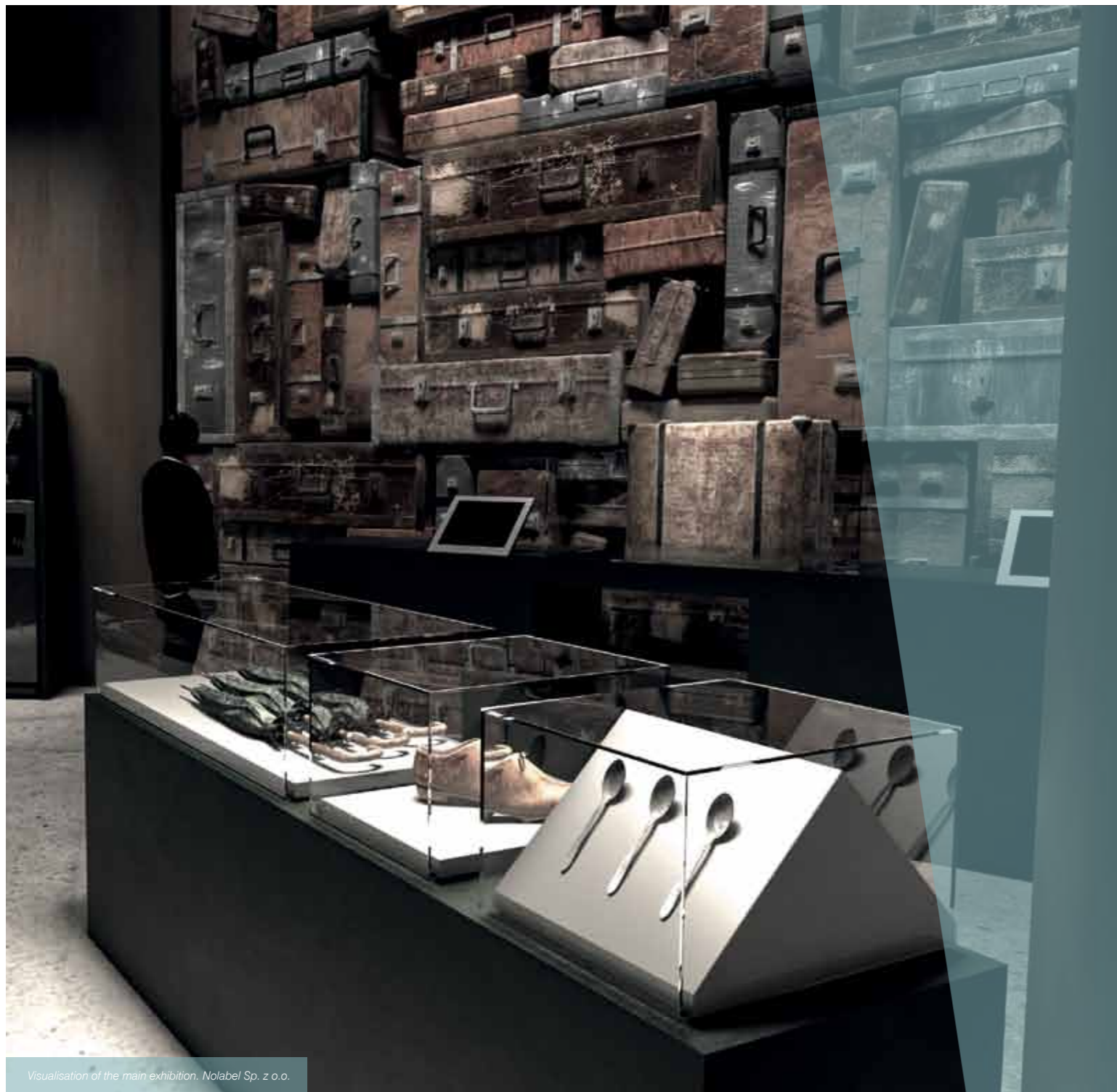
26 November

Album *Codziennosc w cieniu terroru* [Everyday Life in the Shadow of Terror] awarded the Klio Award in the edition category



17 December

Meeting of the Board of Trustees



Work on the permanent exhibition

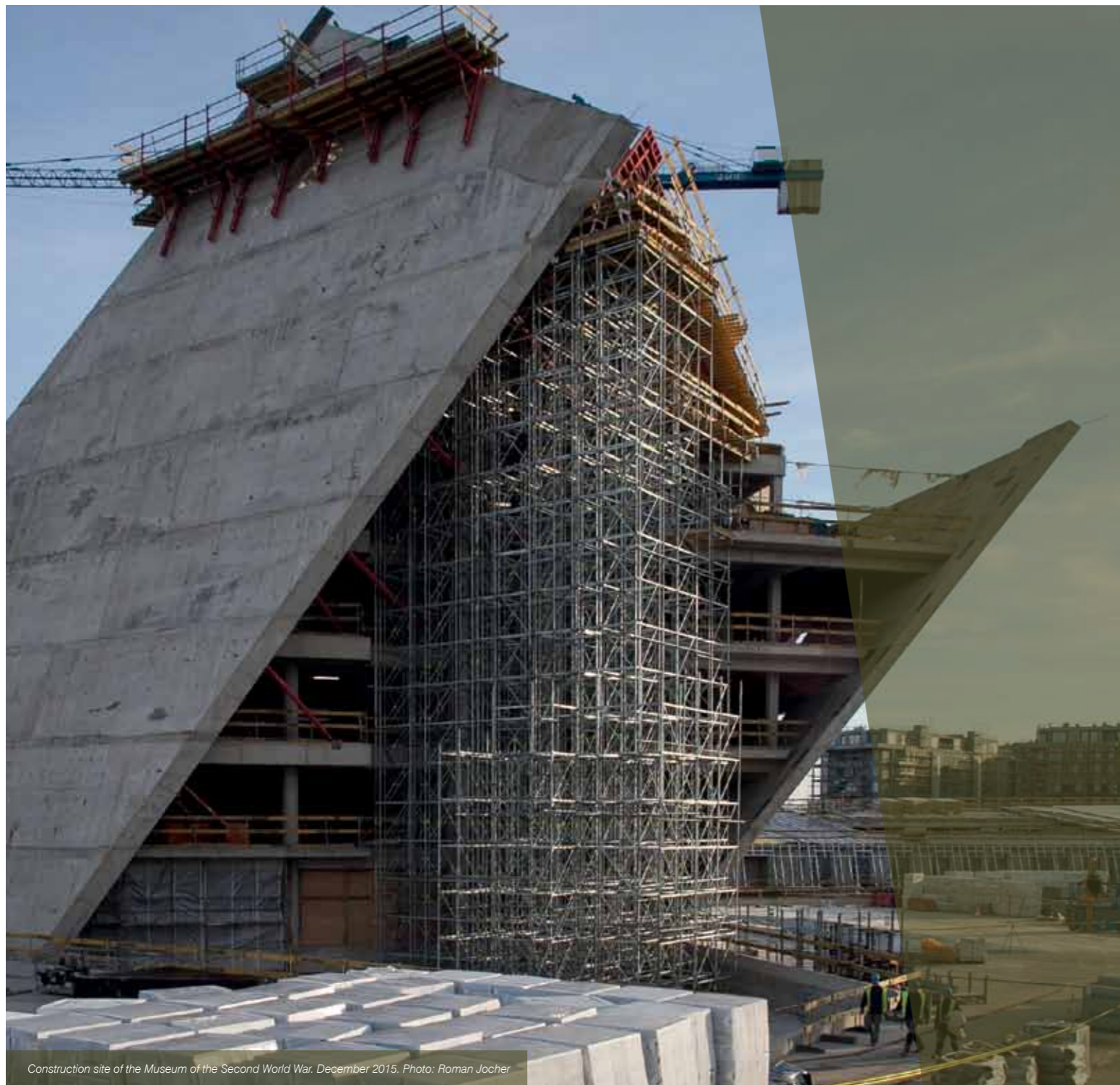
As a result of a limited tender a consortium led by the Qumak Company from Warsaw was chosen in April 2015 to execute the Museum's permanent exhibition. The cooperation agreement was signed on 6 May 2015. The exhibition is to be ready in 18 months. The schedule of its production and installation includes, for instance, preparatory work for the production of the exhibition and preparation of shop drawings, prefabrication of the individual elements of the scenography, and arrangements regarding the audio and visual devices to be installed at the exhibition. While performing its tasks the Qumak Company closely cooperates with the Museum team and the Tempora Company, which designed the exhibition.

Simultaneously with the work performed by the Qumak Company the Museum team is also performing other tasks connected with the main exhibition and preparations for its opening. The Museum's activity concentrates on the final corrections and verification of the materials prepared by the NoLabel Company, that is, the films, multimedia presentations, and animations, which are to be on display. The texts that accompany the said materials are being verified, corrected and translated into English. We are also obtaining the copyright for the film materials and images and working on texts for the audioguides.

The Museum team is also preparing the permanent exhibition's catalogue, which is to be available in Polish and English. It shall not only discuss the most interesting exhibits, but also the Museum's programme assumptions and the individual themes of the exhibition.



Visualisation of the main exhibition.
NoLabel Sp. z o.o.



Museum construction



Bird's-eye view of the construction site of the Museum of the Second World War. June 2015.
Photo: AeroLab

Between January and August 2015 the construction crew erected internal walls, pillars, ceilings, and halls and corridors. The internal structure of the exhibition space in the future building of the Museum emerged during the first months of 2015. In the third quarter the crew continued reinforcement and shuttering of pillars and walls, including the leaning ones which shall be a part of the future exhibition halls. In August the reinforced concrete structure reached the ground level. The construction of the monumental stairs from level -4,5 m to -14 m (permanent exhibition level) also came to an end. Having assembled the prefabricated elements of the conference hall and cinema auditorium, the crew began finishing works in the conference room. Furthermore, the first lifts were installed in the building.

The fitting of sanitary, electrical, and tele-technical installations began in the second quarter of 2015. Furthermore, masonry works were performed on the level of the underground parking lots and in technical rooms. The crew also carried out preparatory works for the installation of the façade in the moat. The last quarter of 2015 also saw the end of the construction of the administration building and partial fitting of installations and windows.

The construction of the characteristic tower – the highest part of the building – was finished in December, when it reached its intended height of 40.51 metres. The tower shall hold, for instance, classrooms, auditoria, a library, and a restaurant and café with a view of Gdansk rebuilt after the war. Its façade and ceiling are to be partially glazed.



A the top: Placing large-size exhibits in the building of the Museum of the Second World War. January 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher

Below: Construction works on the tower. October–November 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher and AeroLab



Bird's-eye view of the construction site of the Museum of the Second World War. November 2015. Photo: AeroLab

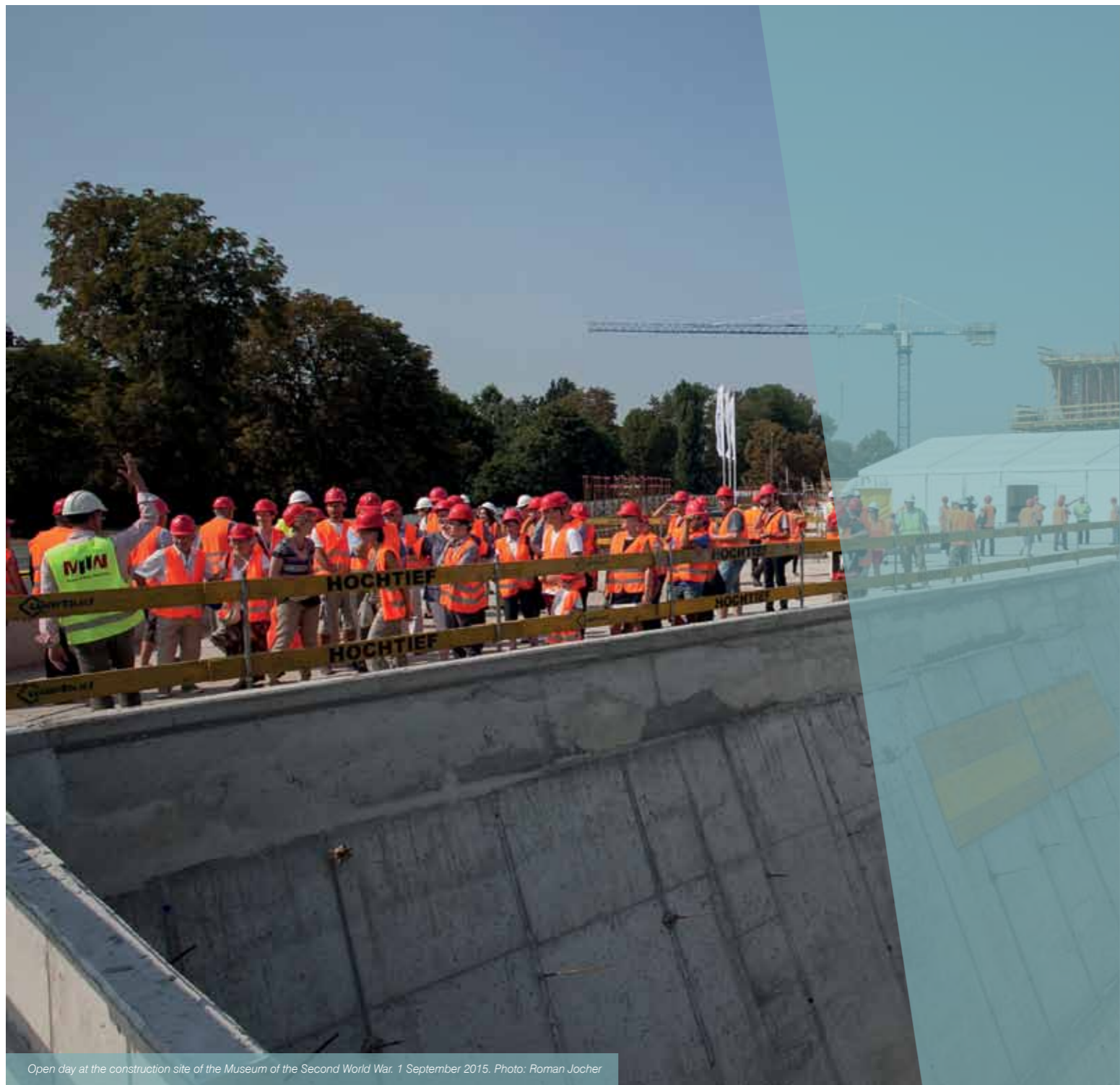


Moreover, in 2015 we also performed 90 per cent of the works connected with the reconstruction of the bank of the River Mottawa in order to install the facilities for intake and discharge of water used for cooling the building. Simultaneously the building was also plumbed in and connected to the electric installation and heating network. The main square was waterproofed in preparation for laying it with red granite setts, which shall match the colour of the concrete facing of the tower and the administration building.

Last year the first exhibits were placed in the Museum. Two tanks (Soviet T-34/85 and American Sherman), a German G7 torpedo, and a wagon manufactured in Germany were placed on the foundation plate on 15 January. Due to the weight of those objects' and their historic value it was a spectacular operation with the use of specialist equipment. The exhibits needed to be placed on the foundation plate before closing the underground section of the building with the ceiling on the ground level. Another large-scale exhibit – a car, Fiat Balilla – was placed in the building on 14 December.



*At the top, on the right: The highest point of the tower.
At the bottom, on the left: Shell of the conference room; on the right, the space of one of the exhibition areas.
Photo: Roman Jocher*



Open day at
the Museum construction site,
1 September 2015



Prof. Norman Davies watching the exhibits presented during the open day.

The Enigma encrypting machine from the Museum's collection presented during the open day.

Photo: Roman Jocher



Open day at the construction site of the Museum of the Second World War. 1 September 2015. Photo: Roman Jocher

On 1 September the Museum of the Second World War opened its construction site to the public for the first time. Groups of visitors were accompanied by guides, who discussed the construction's progress, the investment, and the technologies used at the individual stages of the construction. The participants could see not only the construction site, but also the permanent exhibition rooms 14 metres below the ground level, which was also where we organised the first screening of the promo video, starring Maja Ostaszewska, which presents the content of the permanent exhibition and our mission. After the screening those gathered could see the most interesting exhibits from the Museum's collection, including an original specimen of the Enigma coding machine, a film camera of the American documentary filmmaker Julien Bryan, and the largest exhibits already in place in the exhibition space: a Sherman Firefly tank and a German wagon used to transport deportees, prisoners, forced labourers, and Holocaust victims.



Collection

*Rheinmetall-Borsig typewriter, used by Maria Mlyńska, who worked in the office of the Polish government in exile, donated to the Museum of the Second World War and presented during the open day at the construction site.
Photo: Roman Jocher*



Prof. Wiesław Gruszkowski donating the flag to the Museum of the Second World War's collection.
Photo: Renata Dąbrowska/Agencja Gazeta

Representatives of the Museum of Japanese Army Unit 731 Crime Evidence in Harbin and Harbin Academy of Social Sciences donating the exhibits.
Photo: Alicja Bittner

Currently, the Museum collection comprises approx. 36,000 items. In 2015 we bought 2,555 items and received 1,812 from donors, while another 95 items were loaned.

This process has been facilitated by our close contacts with combatants and veterans as well as our cooperation with many institutions in Poland and abroad.

Some of the most precious items obtained in 2015 are:

■ The Polish flag hidden in 1939 by the Gruszkowski family from Soviet soldiers after the Red Army's arrival in Lviv. The flag was donated to the Museum by Professor Wiesław Gruszkowski, born in Lviv and associated with Gdańsk since 1945. An architect and urban planner, immediately after the war he took part in the reconstruction of the historic part of the city. The flag shall be on display in the permanent exhibition's section devoted to the history of resistance against the Soviet occupier [1].

■ Signet ring made at the camp in Ryazan by subordinates of General Aleksander Krzyżanowski "Wilk". The image on the ring alludes to the commander's nom de guerre (*wilk* is Polish for 'wolf'). Aleksander Krzyżanowski was an officer of the Polish Army, a participant of the defensive war in 1939, and during the occupation the commander of the Vilna District of the Home Army. In July 1944 he commanded Operation Gate of Dawn, during which Home Army detachments seized Vilna in

cooperation with the Red Army. After the successful operation Krzyżanowski was duplicitously arrested by the NKVD and deported into the interior of the Soviet Union. In the autumn of 1947 he returned to Poland only to be arrested in the summer of 1948 by the state security functionaries. He died in prison in Warsaw in 1951 [2].



Other noteworthy exhibits that enriched the Museum's collection in 2015 are:

Components of soldiers' uniforms and equipment

■ Uniform cap of Captain Antoni Kasztelan, the Coastal Defence counterintelligence chief, arrested by the Gestapo in violation of the Geneva Convention in a POW camp. Kasztelan was tortured during the investigation and sentenced to death for his counterintelligence activity before the war. Guillotined in December 1942, his body was given to the Anatomic Institute in Königsberg [1].

■ Medical service officer Michał Pastuszak's four-cornered field cap (model 1937) and officer's coat (model 36). Inside the cap and under the coat collar are their owner's signatures. On the lining and inside a coat pocket are two badges left by the tailor, one stating the workshop's name and address (J. Lewandowski in Lublin/Łokietka Square/Telephone 25-78), and the other with a handwritten note referring to Doctor Pastuszak and the date of the service (August 1939) [2].

■ Michał Pastuszak's POW uniform consisting of American uniform trousers and a jacket without insignia. Pastuszak received it in the VII A oflag in Murnau within the framework of aid provided by the International Red Cross. The jacket is signed on the inside by its owner. Pastuszak survived the POW camp, which was liberated by Americans in 1945. He was then deported with other prisoners to Silesia, where he stayed in a psychiatric hospital for over a year before his brother Wincenty Pastuszak managed to find him through the American Bureau of Information and Polish Red Cross.

■ Enamel board of the 27th Volhynian Infantry Division. The board comes from the building in Łuck where divisional courses for officer cadets of the reserve were organised during the interwar period [3].



Everyday life, life in exile

■ Painting of Our Lady of Częstochowa and a nailed hand, which is a piece of a sculpture of crucified Jesus. Both these objects come from the village of Smotrycz near Kamień Podolski destroyed by the Soviets. They were taken away by the family of Michał and Anna Czerwiński, who were deported to Krasnodolsk in Kazakhstan [1].

■ Agnieszka Rudzińska's collection. Objects made or used by her father Stanisław Ścibor-Marchocki during his deportation to Siberia. The objects include: wooden boxes with desiccated specimens of Siberian plants and insects with written information about their origin (the individual specimens were separated with Soviet and Polish newspapers and leaflets), Prima brand two-piece cigarette rolling machine, and tools handmade in exile (a plane and a metal saw) [2].

■ Objects belonging to Maria Butkiewicz, a nurse who worked in a Leningrad hospital during the siege of the city (a hand-held sterilizer with a set of needles and a syringe, a nurse's apron and kerchief, and a backpack) [3].

Camps, the Holocaust

■ Medical devices used by the 731 secret unit of the Japanese Army. The purpose of the pseudo-medical experiments conducted on prisoners in its laboratories was to investigate, for instance, the influence of chemical and biological weapons on living organisms [4].

■ Armbands and patches worn by Jews in ghettos and camps established by the Germans in various countries in occupied Europe during the Second World War. Objects deposited by Wolfgang Haney [5].

■ Gondola car from the first half of the 20th century used in the brickyards located near Tolmick, where prisoners of the Stutthof concentration camp worked during the war [6].

■ *Zmarli Polacy w Dachau 1939–1945. Spis pomordowanych Polaków w obozie koncentracyjnym w Dachau* [Polish victims of Dachau 1939–1945. List of Poles murdered at the Dachau concentration camp], publication edited by Father Edmund Chart, Dachau prisoner No. 28100, and published in 1946 [7].



Photograph collections, letters, prints

■ Polish President Ignacy Mościcki's proclamation of 1 September 1939. The President called on Poles to unite in the face of the Nazi aggression and offer armed resistance [1].

■ Personal documents illustrating the history of Hermann Lüdeking, a child Germanised within the framework of Lebensborn. Found by a nurse as an 18-month boy on the street of occupied Łódź, he was named Roman Roszatowski as per an administrative decision of the city mayor. Next, he was then put in an orphanage, from where he was taken away by the Nazis and put in a Lebensborn facility. In December 1942 the boy, already named Hermann, was taken from a Lebensborn facility near Leipzig by a foster mother, but the woman then abandoned him when he started asking about his origin. Hermann tried to learn something about his parents throughout his life.

■ Collection of black and white photographs depicting everyday life during the occupation on Polish territories [2].

Post-war repressions

■ Tombstone of Adam Dedio, a Navy officer cadet, participant of the Battle of Kock, POW, and Home Army member. He was sentenced to death and executed on the basis of a sentence passed in 1947 by the Navy Court in Gdynia for his underground activity in post-war Poland in the "Semper Fidelis – Victoria" anti-communist organisation. Dedio's mother erected the tombstone in memory of her executed son [3].

■ Board with the national emblem which during 1945–1946 hung above the entrance to the building of the Regional Court Martial in Gdańsk at Batorego Street 5, where members of the pro-independence underground and individuals deemed enemies of the communist regime were put on trial. That was where soldiers of the pro-independence underground were sentenced to death [4].



Conservation

Objects received in poor condition undergo conservation, the main purpose of which is to stop the process of deterioration of the individual items and make them exhibition-worthy. All conservation is conducted with respect for the signs of the passing of time and antiquity value.

In 2015 265 items underwent partial conservation, 1,039 protective conservation, and 328 full conservation. We also made facsimiles of 30 paper documents, which are to be displayed on the permanent exhibition.

Last year Fiat 508C Balilla 1100 was placed in the Museum, which we obtained in 2011 and which had undergone conservation. That model was produced by Fiat in Italy and from 1932 on licence in Poland at the State Engineering Works. A symbol of fascist Italy, it was supposed to be for Italian workers what Volkswagen (later called a "beetle") was for Germans. The car obtained by the Museum is dated at 1937–1938.

The vehicle underwent thorough conservation: the metal elements of the body were protected against corrosion, the car was painted, and the missing original elements of both the interior and the exterior were restored. The elements, which could have been damaged or destroyed were then disassembled and the car was lowered with a crane into the interior of the Museum and placed in the future exhibition space.

Inventory of the collection

The collection is inventoried in the ZEUS Electronic System of Museum Collection Inventory, tailored to our needs. The ZEUS programme is a comprehensive database, which enables us, for example, to describe the exhibits in accordance with Polish law and at the same time edit our museum inventory and create filing cards for items. The implemented solutions enable not only topographic location of the objects, but also registration of all conservation of a given item. The database is also a platform for future publication and exchange of information about the collection on the Internet.

*The Museum's employees recording testimonies in Germany and Kazakhstan.
Photo: Dominik Jagodziński, Waldemar Kowalski.*



Second World War eyewitness accounts

Our collection also includes video recordings. By the end of 2015 we had made 189 of them. Last year alone our collection was enriched with 47 recordings of interviews with eyewitnesses, 25 of which were made in Poland, 8 in Ukraine, 7 in Kazakhstan, and 7 in Germany. The interviews conducted in Poland were recorded, for instance, in Gdańsk, Warsaw, Bydgoszcz, Zamość, Bochnia, and Sztum. Some of the broad spectrum of topics of the recordings made in Poland:

- September 1939, including the events in the Free City of Danzig,
- the occupier's terror toward the Polish and Jewish populations,
- clandestine teaching,
- forced labour of Poles in Germany,
- camps: KL Auschwitz, KL Dachau, KL Buchenwald, KL Mauthausen, and KL Bergen-Belsen,
- Polish partisan activity on the eastern frontier of the Second Republic of Poland,
- Aleksander Krzyżanowski "Wilk" and the history of his family in memories of his daughter Olga Krzyżanowska.
- deportations of Poles into the interior of the Soviet Union in 1940 and 1945,
- post-war deportations of Poles from contemporary territories of Lithuania and Belarus, repatriation conditions, and life in the territories incorporated into Poland,
- Polish Armed Forces in the West,



- capture of Gdańsk in 1945 and the accompanying acts of violence against the population,
- Soviet repressions in Poland after 1944 against members of the post-war pro-independence underground.

The recordings made in Kazakhstan regarded the fate of Polish families deported in 1936 from the Ukrainian territories bordering Poland. The testimonies of those who had in consequence been deprived of a normal childhood were particularly distressing.

The recordings made in Ukraine regarded, for instance, the Soviet and German occupation of the eastern frontier of Poland, the occupiers' terror, the massacres conducted by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the manner of recruitment to the Red Army, and the soldiers' combat trail. Several recordings talk about the crimes of Ukrainian nationalists (for instance, at the former prison in Włodzimierz Wołyński, in Janowa Dolina, and in the village of Dołhe).

The recordings made in Germany regarded, for instance, Germanisation of children and the operation of Lebensborn, and also the activity of war criminal Heinz Reinefarth, who after the war lived on the Sylt Island in Germany.

All of the recordings constitute an important testimony to the Second World War and its consequences.

Film collection of the Home Army Film Foundation

In connection to the liquidation of the Home Army Film Foundation and by decision of its Founders' Council, the Museum received 35 films produced by the Foundation. Most of the obtained unique video materials are interviews with Home Army soldiers, some of whom are important figures from the Polish Underground State. On 16 April 2015 the Museum and the Home Army Film Foundation in liquidation signed an agreement by which the collection of the Foundation became Museum property and the Museum committed itself to making the films available and digitalising them.



Scholarly activity
and publications

Publications

Museum publications in 2015:

■ Joanna Urbanek, **Everyday Life in the Shadow of Terror. German occupation in Poland 1939–1945** (English edition of the 2014 album *Codziennosc w cieniu terroru. Okupacja niemiecka w Polsce 1939–1945*)

■ Pavel Polian, **Wbrew ich woli. Historia i geografia migracji przymusowych w Związku Radzieckim** [Against their will. The history and geography of forced migrations in the USSR]

This publication is a historical-geographical study of forced migrations in the USSR conducted with authorisation from the state authorities both within the Soviet Union and outside its borders.

from the introduction

■ Mark Spoerer, **Praca przymusowa pod znakiem swastyki. Cudzoziemscy robotnicy, jeńcy wojenni i więźniowie w Niemczech i okupowanej Europie w latach 1939–1945** [Forced labour under the banner of the swastika. Foreign workers, prisoners of war, and prisoners in Germany and the occupied Europe in 1939–1945]

Why were foreign labourers used on such a scale? How many labourers were there and where did they come from? What were their living and working conditions? How many of them survived? How many died? Who was responsible for that? And finally, who, when, and from whom was compensated for that? This book attempts to answer these questions.

from the introduction

■ **Druga wojna światowa w pamięci kulturowej w Polsce i w Niemczech. 70 lat później (1945–2015)** [The Second World War in cultural memory in Poland and Germany. 70 years later (1945–2015)], edited by Jerzy Kałużny, Amelia Korzeniewska, and Bartosz Korzeniewski

The authors discuss an important topic, thus enriching the reflection on Polish-German relations in the sphere of collective memory. Their compact and synthetic work provides much detailed information.

Doctor hab. Piotr Tadeusz Kwiatkowski



■ Audrius Žulys, **Polska w polityce zagranicznej Litwy w latach 1938–1939. Studium z historii dyplomacji** [Poland in Lithuania's foreign policy 1938–1939. A study in diplomatic history]

This publication is addressed to those interested in the history of international relations, diplomacy, and Polish-Lithuanian relations. This is the first time that the Polish reader is given a book with such solid foundations in terms of source materials, one that is based not only on Polish, but predominantly Lithuanian archival documents.

from the introduction

Publications in cooperation with other institutions:

■ **Ludzie i ich opowieści. Żuławy w 1945 roku** [The people and their stories. Żuławy in 1945], edited by Andrzej Gąsiorowski and Janusz Hochleitner. Published in cooperation with the Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo.

■ Andrzej Drzycimski, Janusz Górski, **The Redoubt Westerplatte** (in English)

■ Andrzej Drzycimski, Janusz Górski, **Festung Westerplatte** (in German)

Award for our publication

Joanna Urbanek's album *Codziennosc w cieniu terroru. Okupacja niemiecka w Polsce 1939–1945* [Everyday life in the shadow of terror. German occupation in Poland 1939–1945] received an award in the publication category of the 2014 "Sybilla" Competition for the Museum Event of the Year and the Klio award in the editing category.





Opening of the International Conference of Historians "The legacy of the Second World War reconsidered after 70 years." 6 May 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher

"The Legacy of the Second World War from a 70-Year Perspective" international conference of historians

Organised by the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, the Museum of the Second World War, and the European Solidarity Centre, the international conference of historians was held on 6–7 May 2015 at the European Solidarity Centre.

The opening address was given by Adam Daniel Rotfeld, the co-chairman of the Polish-Russian Group for Difficult Matters. "This conference has an ethical character. Our meeting is an attempt to find the truth, which is not always easy," he said during his speech.

During the five discussion panels the historians talked about the following topics: the shaping of memory of the Second World War in historical museums, the Second World War in collective memory, the legacy of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, the post-war world order from a 70-year perspective, and contemporary interpretation of and research on the consequences of the Second World War.

The conference was attended by many eminent historians and museologists from around the world, including representatives of our Museum's Advisory Board, Professors Norman Davies, Timothy D. Snyder, and Élie Barnavi.

Museum library

At this point the Museum collection comprises approx. 16,095 publications connected with the subject matter of the Second World War and its consequences. It includes books, periodicals, audiovisual and electronic documents, and maps. We acquired nearly 2,507 library items in 2015 alone.

We also collect publications on conservation, restoration, and preservation of museum collections as well as numerous materials to aid the operation of our departments, for instance, the educational one.

The collection includes texts in Polish, English, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Finnish, Flemish, French, Korean, Lithuanian, Luxembourgish, Latvian, German, Norwegian, Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovakian, Ukrainian, and Italian.

Research projects

In 2015 the staff of the Museum of the Second World War worked on the following research projects:

- **Continuation of the research project on the history of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German/Nazi Crimes.** It is to result in a publication presenting the Commission's structure and activity, its importance in bringing Nazi war criminals to justice in post-war Poland, and its role as a scholarly and opinion-forming centre. The project is led by Łukasz Jasiński, a member of the Research Staff.

- **Work on a comparative analysis of the legal and political settlement of accounts for Second World War crimes and collaboration in individual European countries.** The project is to conclude with a cross-sectional scholarly study on the post-war process of coming to terms with the past, which will also be compared with analogous efforts made at other historic moments, for instance, after the First World War, after the Spanish Civil War, after the fall of communist dictatorships, etc. The project is headed by Professor Paweł Machcewicz, the director of our Museum.

■ **Prisoners of war in German captivity on Polish territories incorporated into the Reich (1939–1945).** The objective of this research project is to publish a comprehensive monograph on prisoners of war in German captivity during the 1939–1945 period in Polish territories incorporated into the Reich. The project is headed by Jan Daniluk, a member of the Research Staff.

■ **The German police and the SS in Polish territories incorporated into the Reich (1939–1945).** The project is headed by Jan Daniluk, a member of the Research Staff.

■ **Everyday life during the Second World War.** This project is to compare the changes that this conflict brought into the lives of people living in European countries (the occupied ones, the Allied ones, and the Axis ones). The project is headed by Joanna Urbanek, a member of the Research Team.

■ **Resistance and the underground in the Baltic States in 1941–1953.** The intention of this project is to create a monograph on the pro-independence underground active in the Baltic States during the German and Soviet occupations. The book shall attempt to analyse the activities, development, and ideological profile of the underground organisations operating in the two different occupation systems. The issue will be presented against an extensive background of the individual countries' histories. The publication will be based on a search query in the Baltic States' archives and reference books (Estonian, Latvian, Russian, and English). Another objective is to compare the pro-independence underground in the Baltic States and in Poland. Leading the project is Professor Rafał Wnuk, head of the Research Department.

■ **Monte Cassino.** This project is to conclude with a publication on the fighting to break the Gustav Line in 1944. It is to show the contribution of the Polish and other Allied contingents, which fought on the Italian front line. Doctor Jan Szkudliński, a member of the Research Team, is in charge of the project.

■ **Jews in the structures of Polish underground military organisations in the Warsaw District during 1939–1945.** This project is to investigate the activity of individuals of Jewish nationality in the Polish underground. Leading the project is Wojciech Łukaszun, an employee of the Exhibition Department.

■ **Soviet partisans in the territories of the Second Republic of Poland.** The project is led by Dmitriy Panto, a member of the Research Staff.

■ **Deportations of Poles into the interior of the USSR during 1936–1941.** The project is led by Dmitriy Panto, a member of the Research Staff.

■ **Gdańsk Bay 1943–1945.** The objective of this project is to show the military location of this area, its importance for the war and economic machine of the Third Reich and for the preparations for the defence at the turn of 1944 and 1945. The project is led by Marcin Westphal, head of the Exhibition Department.

■ **Special (diversion and sabotage) operations in the policy of European states and military conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries.** This project is to focus on the engagement of the civilian population in special and sabotage operations during the Second World War. Professor Tomasz Chinciński, head of the Publishing Department, is in charge of the project.

■ **Protectorate of the Czech Republic and Moravia – collaboration, adjustment strategies, resistance.** This project is to result in a monograph devoted to the German occupation of the Czech territories, and particularly the stance of the political elites and society. The publication will be based on a search query in Czech and German archives. The project is headed by Doctor Piotr M. Majewski, deputy director of the Museum.

■ **Native population in the Gdańsk Province as exemplified by the Sztum county in 1945–1959.** This project is to show the situation of the native population in the context of the post-war reality and the process of the establishment of the communist regime. It is focused on depicting the correlation of the population groups that formed the new society of the Western and Northern Territories against the background of the national and social policy in communist Poland. The project is led by Bartłomiej Garba, an employee of the Exhibition Department.



Opening of the "45. End of the war in 45 artefacts" exhibition in the European Solidarity Centre.
6 May 2015. Photo: Roman Jocher

Educational activity



Opening of the "The Soldier's Fate" exhibition in the Museum of the Wieluń Land. 18 November 2015. Photo: Ewelina Dragosz

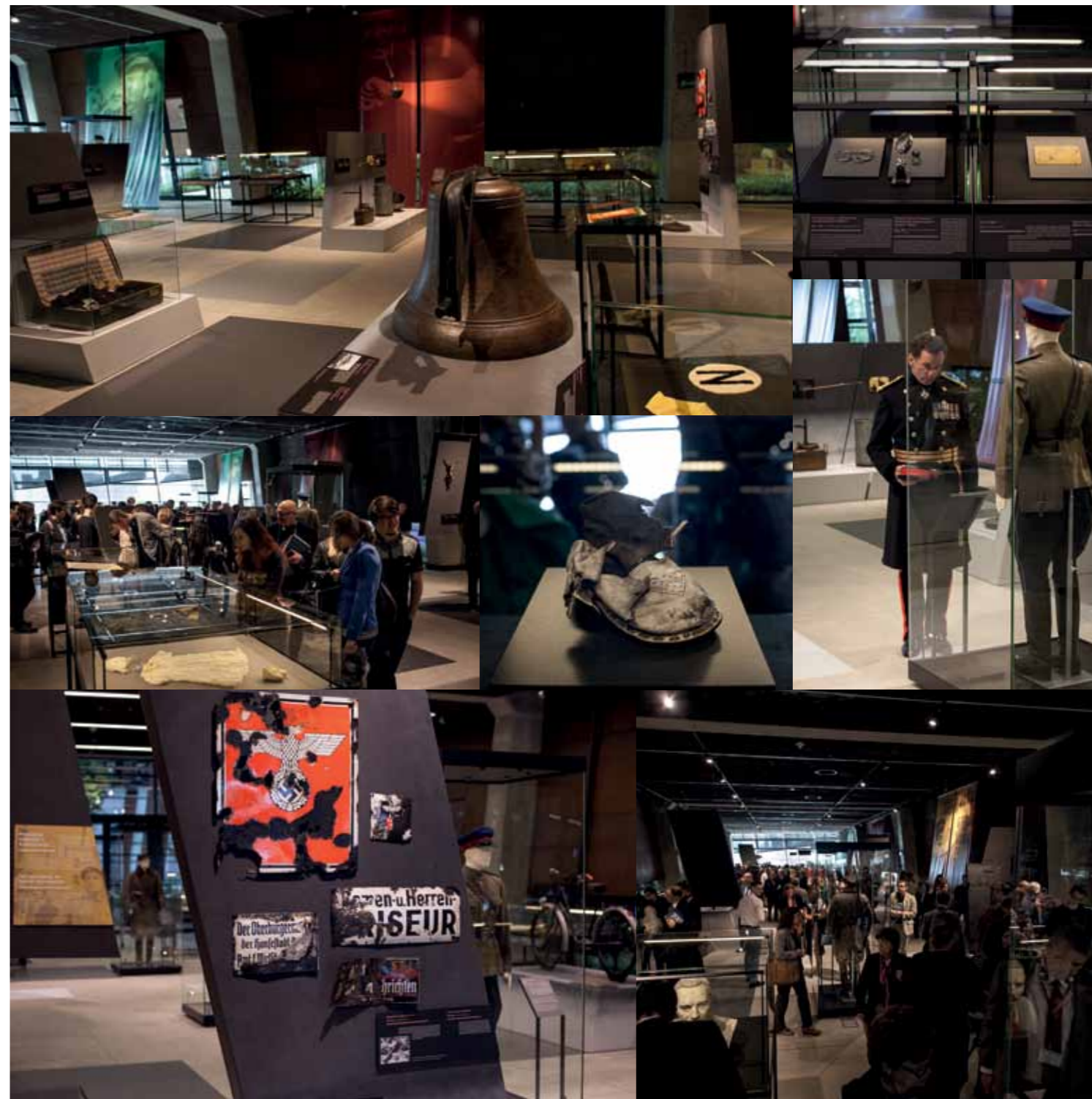
Temporary exhibitions

"The Soldier's Fate. The Everyday Life of Soldiers during the Second World War", 3 October 2014–15 November 2015, Naval Museum in Gdynia; 18 November 2015–6 April 2016, Wieluń Region Museum in Wieluń

The exhibition combines a modern graphic design with traditional forms of exhibition, presenting the everyday life of soldiers fighting on the Second World War front lines. Using exhibits, documents, and mostly previously unpublished photographs, the exhibition shows the less known aspects of military service, seen not only from the perspective of the battlefield. In 2015 the exhibition was visited by **8,500 people**.

"45. End of the War in 45 artefacts", 6 May–10 September 2015, European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk

This exhibition showed the end of the war from the Polish perspective using 45 objects or sets of objects connected with that event. The exhibits mostly expressed the experience of Poland and Central-Eastern Europe. Some of them told stories of specific people and places, while others were simply characteristic of their times. The exhibits were divided into thematic groups, but the sight-seeing route was not clearly marked. Consequently, visitors could see the presented objects in the



The "45. End of the war in 45 artefacts" exhibition in the European Solidarity Centre. 6 May 2015. Photo: Roman Jocher



Opening of the "Routes of Liberation" exhibition in the Gallery at the Kazimierzowski Palace, Warsaw University, 12 February 2016.
Photo: Dominik Kotowski

order they wished and form their own opinion on the final weeks of the war and the beginning of the new order. The exhibition was visited by **92,056 people**.

"Routes of Liberation. European Legacies of the Second World War", gallery of the Kazimierzowski Palace at the University of Warsaw's campus, 12–26 February 2015

Prepared by the Museum of the Second World War and its partners from Holland, Germany, France, and Great Britain, this exhibition discusses the causes, course, and complicated legacy of that conflict and its consequences for European countries. It is an effect of joint work of an international team of museologists and historians composed of representatives of the Liberation Route Europe Foundation from the Netherlands, the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, the Allied Museum Berlin, the Mémorial de Caen Museum, the National Liberation Museum 1944–1945 in Groesbeek, and the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth.

Opening of the "Routes of Liberation" exhibition in the St John's Centre in Gdańsk, 4 March 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher



The exhibition was opened in February 2014 at the European Parliament in the presence of its President, Martin Schulz, and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, from where it went on a European tour, displayed at all of the partner institutions. Its opening in Warsaw was attended by the Dutch Ambassador to Poland Paul P.J. Bekkers. In 2015 the exhibition in Warsaw was visited by **1,514 people**.

"Routes of Liberation. European Legacies of the Second World War", Gdańsk, St John's Centre, 4–15 March 2015

The opening of the exhibition in Gdańsk was accompanied by a debate of historians on „Different memory of war. European nations towards their past” attended by:

- Professor Paweł Machcewicz, director of the Museum of the Second World War,
- Doctor Jörg Echternkamp, Centre for Military History and Social Sciences of the German Army,
- Doctor Wiel Lenders, director of National Liberation Museum 1944–1945 in Groesbeek,
- Doctor Keith Allen, one of the exhibition's curators.

In Gdańsk the exhibition was visited by **2,263 people**.



European Night of Museums on Westerplatte. 16 May 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher

Outdoor events

European Night of Museums, 16 May 2015

On the occasion of the European Night of Museums the Museum of the Second World War prepared a special **educational zone** on Westerplatte. The programme included workshops run by Museum employees: "In a Conservator's Workshop", devoted to conservation of exhibits, and "Secrets of the Enigma", educational workshops for children and teenagers held with use of teaching aids explaining the operation of the German Enigma coding machine and showing the success of Polish cryptologists.

We also prepared a stand of re-enactors playing Polish soldiers of 1939 in the New Barracks' ruins. The participants could also see the "Westerplatte: a Spa, a Bastion, a Symbol" permanent outdoor exhibition, specially lit for that night, and go on trolley rides along the railway on the peninsula. The programme was addressed to both adults and children.

Within the framework of the European Night of Museums visitors could also see the exhibition titled "**45. End of the War in 45 artefacts**" prepared by our Museum and displayed in the temporary exhibition hall at the European Solidarity Centre.

The event was attended by **6,000 people**.

Shows of "The Explosion", film and multimedia performance, during the European Night of Museums on Westerplatte.
Photo: Roman Jocher



The shows of "The Explosion" film and multimedia performance on Westerplatte, 15-17 May 2015

The shows of "The Explosion" by Andrzej Wajda organised 15–17 May provided additional entertainment during the European Night of Museums. The video was projected on a large screen in a storehouse located on the peninsula made available especially for that occasion. Using computer animation and video mapping, the show presented one of the most dramatic pages of history, beginning with Hitler's takeover of power in Germany until the outbreak of the war and the fighting in September 1939. "The Explosion" employed rare archival films and photographs, mixed with fragments of Andrzej Wajda's films *Lotna* and *Katyń*.

“Operation Tempest” Historical and Educational Re-enactment, 19 April 2015

Prepared in cooperation with the Folk Architecture Museum – the Ethnographic Park in Olsztyniek, the re-enactment was to present the history of the Polish Underground State, particularly the events of 1944 Operation Tempest. The main historical inspiration was the selected aspects of the operation of the 27th Volhynian Infantry Division of the Home Army.

The event consisted of three main re-enactments showing the Soviet offensive on the Eastern front line, which was the direct cause for the order to launch Operation Tempest. Behind the front line the re-enactors presented various forms of partisan activity, inspired by the history of the 27 Volhynian Division. The four re-enactment shows concerned the partisan attacks on German posts, German supply units, and retaliatory German roundups on partisan detachments. The voice-over commentary and specially prepared brochures lend to the educational value of the shows. The guests of honour were veterans from the Pomeranian branch of the World Society of Home Army Soldiers.

The number of participants amounted to **1,500 people**.

“Operation N” Outdoor Game, 27 September 2015

The “Operation N” outdoor game was prepared by our Museum on the occasion of the Polish Underground State Day. The event was organised in the Nowy Port quarter of Gdańsk with characteristic historic buildings. The participants received various tasks connected with the anti-Nazi underground and everyday life during the Second World War. Following the route marked on the patrol card, they met a Home Army messenger and visited an office of a sabotage periodicals' editor and an underground printing house hidden in a private basement. A separate element of the game was the re-enactment of Polish soldiers' attacks on German soldiers. The participants could also listen to a street concert of Kapela Czerniakowska at a makeshift outdoor market, where the re-enactors played civilians in everyday situations.

The event was attended by **450 people**.



Historical re-enactment of “Operation Tempest” in Olsztyniek and the city game “Operation N” in Nowy Port.
Photo: Roman Jocher



"Westerplatte – Find a Key to Its History" outdoor educational game.
Photo: Roman Jocher

Classes, projects, educational workshops

Active Visits to the Westerplatte Battlefield

This project is addressed to students of lower and upper secondary schools. The young people become familiar with the course of the defensive operations in September 1939. An important part of the programme is visiting the "Westerplatte: a Spa, a Bastion, a Symbol" permanent outdoor exhibition prepared in 2009 by the Museum of the Second World War and following the educational path opened in July 2011. It consists of information boards, which show the visitors how the peninsula looked during the military operations in September 1939. It also serves as a guide to the buildings of the former Military Transit Depot. In 2015 **610 students** took part in the workshops.

"Westerplatte – Find a Key to Its History" outdoor educational game

The game is addressed to pupils from third grades of primary school. It is to familiarise them with the history of Westerplatte and the objects located on the peninsula.

The students have to solve historical puzzles, which not only effectively combine learning and fun, but also teach teamwork. The children learn about the genesis of former Military Transit Depot, and the course of the defensive operations in September 1939. Taking part in this project, the re-enactors help the students perform their tasks and describe the equipment and uniforms of soldiers who fought in the Second World War. Trolley rides along the historic railway at the old Storehouse provide

"Secrets of the Enigma" educational workshops.
Photo: Roman Jocher



additional entertainment. In 2015 the number of students and guardians who participated in the game amounted to **2,693**.

"Outdoor School of Freedom"

An educational project carried out in cooperation with the European Solidarity Centre and addressed to secondary school students. Its offer includes lectures and workshops, which promote knowledge of the most important events in newest history and in the history of Pomerania, and visits to the European Solidarity Centre and Westerplatte. This project is also to familiarise students with the mission and offer of two institutions: the Museum of the Second World War and the European Solidarity Centre. **90 students** took part in the workshops in 2015.

"Secrets of the Enigma"

Workshops for students of grades 1–2 of upper secondary schools. The workshops' topic is the work of Polish mathematicians and their contribution to the breaking of the code of the German Enigma coding machine, as well as the influence of that fact on the course of the Second World War. The workshops supplement and develop the information from the history syllabus. The teaching aids prepared especially for this project include coding machine models with rotors, which enabled the students to code messages independently, and electronic simulators of the Enigma machine. They make it easier for the participants to learn how the Enigma worked and understand the challenge the Polish cryptologists faced. In 2015 **180 students** took part in the workshops.



Educational workshops accompanying the "45. End of the war in 45 artefacts" exhibition.
Photo: Joanna Rafteropoulos

Educational workshops accompanying the "45. End of the War in 45 artefacts" temporary exhibition
Workshops for students of grades 1–3 of lower secondary school. The purpose was to introduce the young participants to the subject matter of the end of the war and provide additional information on the issues discussed by that temporary exhibition. The workshops included a presentation, practical activities, and an active visit to the exhibition with use of a specially prepared educational game. **127 students** took part in the workshops.

"The Soldiers' Fate" workshops

Addressed to students of grades 4–6 of primary school, the workshops referred to the temporary exhibition prepared by the Museum of the Second World War. During the classes the students learned about the everyday life of the soldiers (including the aspects not connected with combat) and the difficulties they had to face. By doing the exercises during the workshops the students become familiar, for instance, with the uniform and equipment of soldiers of various armies fighting during the Second World War. The workshops were conducted also at the 21st Regional Tourist Fair "Where Cultures Meet" held in Łódź on 13–15 March 2015.

"Alarm for the City!" historical game

The participants learned about the bombing of towns and cities during the Second World War. Sitting at several stands, they played board games on aerial combat and completed tasks from their worksheets. The instructors explained the rules and provided details of the events illustrated by the individual games. The workshop was accompanied by a presentation of unique photographs and

Meetings during the series "The History on Board: Alarm for the City!" in Manhattan library and during "Play and Fun" trade fairs.
Photo: Ewelina Dragosz



music from that period. In 2015 the meetings took place at the "Manhattan" Library and during the Fun and Games Fair at the "AmberExpo" Exhibition and Convention Centre in Gdańsk. The number of participants amounted to **340**.

Meetings with historical board games

The purpose of this long term project is to build a group of historical and war board games enthusiasts associated with the Museum and to promote this form of historical education. The objective is also to build a team that could be used during future major branch events, such as, hobbies festivals. The participants of these weekly meetings learn how to play the games and also find out about their historical background and the ongoing educational and exhibition activity of the Museum. In 2015 **110 people** took part in those weekly meetings, which began in August.

Workshops on historical board games design within the framework of Memory Lessons.

The workshops, addressed to secondary school students, were held at the Salesian School Complex in Rumia. During the four months of the duration of this project the participants were introduced to the mechanisms used in modern board games and the principles of their design, and then worked in groups on their own historical games. The students also met Doctor Mariusz Kardas from the Polish Naval Academy in Gdynia, who is a specialist on the history of Gdynia. The number of participants was **20**.



"Bringing Westerplatte Closer to the Young" workshops in the Primary School Complex No 2 in Gdańsk.
Photo: Eizbieta Rabant

"Bringing Westerplatte Closer to Us" Educational Project

The purpose of these classes, prepared for students with special educational needs, was to teach them about the history of Westerplatte. The students saw fragments of archival films and iconographic elements of the "Westerplatte: a Spa, a Bastion, a Symbol" permanent outdoor exhibition and used other teaching aids such as maps and uniform and equipment replicas.

13th Baltic Festival of Science – "A Cross from Taiga. In a Conservator's Workshop"

Within the framework of the Baltic Festival of Science our Museum conducted workshops focusing on one of our exhibits – a wooden cross from a cemetery of Polish exiles in Syuzma in the Arhangelsk Oblast of the Russian Federation. During the workshops the cross was used as an element of narration on the deportations of Poles by the Soviet authorities during and after the Second World War. The workshops had an interdisciplinary character – they talked not only about history, but also about conservation of historical artefacts. 40 people participated in the workshops.

The second edition of the Totalitarian Propaganda Film Festival in the Gdańsk Shakespeare Theatre.
20 May 2015.
Photo: Roman Jocher



Film screenings

2nd edition of the totalitarian propaganda film festival, 20–22 May 2015

The programme of the three-day festival included two Soviet productions: *Prostitute* (*Проститутка*), directed by Oleg Frelikh, and *The New Land* (*Поднятая целина*), directed by Yuli Raizman; a German one: *Jew Süss* (*Jud Süß*), directed by Veit Harlan; an Italian one: *Old Guard* (*Vecchia guardia*), directed by Alessandro Blasetti; and a Polish one: *Soldier of Victory* (*Żołnierz zwycięstwa*), directed by Wanda Jakubowska.

Each film was preceded with historical commentary by Professor Eugeniusz Cezary Król, a historian, political scientist, and expert on propaganda and totalitarian cinema. After the screenings the audience participated in discussions devoted to each of the titles. Approx. **600 people** attended the festival.

Public lectures and book promotions within the framework of the “Meetings with History” series

Since the beginning of its operation the Museum of the Second World War has been organising a series of public lectures. In 2015 we organised the following meetings:

- 30 January – promotion of the book *Wojna na Kaszubach* [War in Kashubia] at the History Meeting House in Warsaw with the participation of Katarzyna Madoń-Mitzner, Roland Borchers, and Doctor Piotr Filipkowski,
- 6 March – lecture of Doctor Volker Mohn from the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf titled “NS-Kulturpolitik im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Konzepte, Praktiken, Reaktionen” [Nazi cultural policy in the Protectorate of Czech and Moravia. Concepts, practice, reactions] at the Faculty of History of the University of Gdańsk,
- 17 March – Promotion of the book *Wojna na Kaszubach* [War in Kashubia] in Bytów with the participation of Katarzyna Madoń-Mitzner, Roland Borchers, Doctor Piotr Filipkowski, and Professor Cezary Obracht-Prondzyński,
- 18 March – promotion of the book *Wojna na Kaszubach* [War in Kashubia] in Gdańsk with the participation of Katarzyna Madoń-Mitzner, Roland Borchers, Doctor Piotr Filipkowski, and Professor Cezary Obracht-Prondzyński,
- 31 March – promotion of Aleksander Kuzminych and Siergiej Starostin’s book *Polacy w obwodzie wologodzki: represje, niewola, przymusowe osadnictwo (1937–1953)* [Poles in the Vologda Oblast: repressions, captivity, forced settlement (1937–1953)] with the participation of the co-author of the book Siergiej Starostin, the Polish consul in Petersburg Piotr Marciniak, and the historian and University of Gdańsk Professor Piotr Niwiński,
- 12 May – promotion of Doctor Anna Zapalec’s book *Druga strona sojuszu. Żołnierze brytyjscy w Polsce w czasie II wojny światowej* [The other side of the alliance. British soldiers in Poland during the Second World War] in Gdańsk with the participation of the author and Professor Mieczysław Nurek,
- 16 June – Promotion of Marcin Westphal’s book *Walka o panowanie w głębinach. Historia powstania U-Bootu typu XXI* [Struggle for domination in the depths. History of the construction of the type XXI U-boat] at the Naval Museum in Gdynia with the participation of the author and Professor Waldemar Rezmer,
- 8 October – Promotion of Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak’s book *Świadectwa Zagłady. Obóz w Chełmnie nad Nerem. Getto wiejskie Czachulec* [Holocaust testimonies. The extermination centre in Chełmno nad Nerem. Czachulec rural ghetto] at the Museum of Pro-Independence Traditions in Łódź,
- 15 October – promotion of Pavel Polian’s book *Wbrew ich woli. Historia i geografia migracji przymusowych w Związku Radzieckim* [Against their will. The history and geography of forced migrations in the USSR] in Gdańsk.

Cooperation, patronage of educational projects

The Museum of the Second World War supports initiatives aimed at cultivation of the memory of the Second World War. Some of the events supported or co-organised by the Museum in 2015:

Debate “Between Resistance and Indifference”, 28 November 2015

Organised by the Bolesław Srocki Association, the Museum of the Second World War, and the European Solidarity Centre, the debate was held at the European Solidarity Centre’s auditorium, with Janina Ochojska, Karol Modzelewski, Konrad Piasecki, Maciej Drygas, and Tomasz Lipiński as the panellists. Led by Father Krzysztof Niedałowski, the debate was preceded by meetings of young people with the invited panellists and a screening of Maciej Drygas’s film *Usłyszcie mój krzyk* [Hear my cry]. The starting point of the discussion was a slogan formulated in the 1930s in the milieu of the “Zet” Union or Association of the Polish Youth: “We ask for nothing, we reach for everything,” a milieu from which came soldiers of the “Parasol” Battalion of the Home Army, one of the most well-known detachments of the Polish underground.

Third Historical Picnic “On to Berlin! The Final Days of War,” 30–31 May 2015

The Museum of the Second World War prepared an educational zone with workshops and games for children and adults, which employed, for instance, large-scale board games. The themes were: the breaking of the code of the German Enigma coding machine by Polish mathematicians, the Polish Underground State, the defence of Warsaw in 1939, paper conservation methods, and the topics discussed by the exhibition “45. End of the War in 45 artefacts”. The number of participants in the educational zone was **approx. 200**.

“Łabiszyn Meetings with History. Direction: Berlin”, 5–7 June 2015

The Museum of the Second World War prepared a special educational zone that introduced the participants to historical topics in an interesting and active way. The workshops alluded, for instance, to the themes of the exhibition “45. End of the War in 45 artefacts”. We also prepared shows and presentations of the T-34 tank within the framework of the commemoration of the participation of 1st Army of the Polish Armed Forces in seizing Berlin. The number of participants in the educational zone was **approx. 200**.

13th rally in the footsteps of the soldiers of the 5th Vilna Brigade commanded by Major Zygmunt Szendzielarz “Łupaszko”, 27 June-1 July 2015

The purpose of this annual rally is to introduce the participants to the activity of the Home Army

detachment commanded by Major Zygmunt Szendzielarz “Łupaszko” and other pro-independence partisan detachments active in the Vilna region and Pomerania during 1939–1946, the unique history of Pomerania, Kashubia, and the terrains east of the lower course of the River Vistula (particularly during the war and immediately afterwards) as well as to shape ethics and civic attitude. Within the framework of the rally the Museum of the Second World War prepared historical workshops centred on the theme “Passions and history”. Our employees shared their interests, such as, research, historical board games, historical tourism, or historical re-enactments. The purpose of the workshops was to spread knowledge and present various ways of discovering the past. The rally was attended by **300 people**.

Historical camp “History in the Field”, Piaski–Krynica Morska, July 2015

Scouts and young history enthusiasts met at the scouting base in Piaski near Krynica Morska to celebrate together the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Approx. **250 participants** actively learned about recent history through, for instance, field workshops. The camp was organised by the Scouting Association of the Republic of Poland, while the two co-organisers — the Museum of the Second World War and the Institute of National Remembrance — provided historical workshops and lectures, for instance, on the Warsaw Uprising, the underground and armed resistance in Pomerania during the Nazi occupation, and the anti-communist resistance in Poland after the Second World War.

Race-walking Festival, Polish Post Officer Cup, 29 August 2015

Organised in the centre of Gdańsk in commemoration of those who perished in defence of the Polish Post Office, the annual race-walking festival was enriched with our educational zone. The festival participants were introduced to the events in Pomerania in September 1939, conservation of letters (as exemplified by the reconstructed copy of Major Henryk Sucharski’s letter to his sister) and the history of the breaking of the code of the German Enigma coding machine. The event was attended by **100 people**.

“Second World War in Pomerania” Provincial Competition

The competition was addressed to secondary school students from the Pomorskie Province. Our Museum helped the organisers prepare the questions for the school and provincial stages and conduct the workshops for students and history teachers who qualified for the final. Our representatives also served as jurors during the competition’s final held in March in Gdańsk.

Art show summing up the “Sound in the Silence” project, Sopot, 12 September 2015

The “Sound in the Silence” project combines art, education, and history. Every year its young participants from various countries meet in a place in Europe connected with 20th century history. In 2015 the project came to an end on the Polish coast.

It began on 7 September and during the next seven days the students learned about the recent and war-time history of Gdańsk and its vicinity. The programme included visits to the European Solidarity Centre, Westerplatte, and the Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo. Those meetings with ‘big history’ and conversations with witnesses as well as the images of everyday life during the war and the communist regime served as an inspiration and a starting point for joint artistic activity. The students’ visits to the memorial sites were accompanied by workshops run by theatre, literary, dance, and music instructors. The young generation of Europeans was faced with history and its influence on contemporary reality. The memory of the Second World War and the fall of communism in 1989, creatively worked out by the young Germans, Hungarians, and Poles, became the main theme of the art show that summed up the project.

Organisers: European Network Remembrance and Solidarity and the MOTTE Association from Hamburg. Co-organiser: the Museum of the Second World War. The project was subsidised by the European Union, within the framework of the Europe for Citizens programme, and by the German-Polish Youth Office.

Cooperation with veterans

In 2015 our Museum intensified its cooperation with the World Society of Home Army Soldiers, particularly its Pomeranian branch. Within that cooperation’s framework our employees participated in meetings of the milieu of former Home Army soldiers and helped organise celebrations, such as anniversaries (of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, the establishment of the Polish Underground State, etc.) and funerals (for instance, of special force paratrooper Kazimierz Śliwa). Members of the Association participated as guests in the events organised by our Museum, such as, the re-enactment of Operation Tempest in Olsztynek, the open day at the Museum construction site, and the visits to graves of Home Army soldiers on the occasion of All Souls’ Day as part of primary school history lessons.



The Museum's employees during a study visit to the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg. Photo: Ewgenia Suslowa

National and international cooperation



Partners engaged in the Liberation Route Europe project meeting in September 2015 in Kent.
Photo: ©Liberation Route Europe

Continuation of the Liberation Route Europe international historical-tourist project and the launch of its second stage

February 2015 saw the end of the first stage of the Liberation Route Europe project, subsidised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. The partners had made a decision to continue their cooperation and in October 2014 had applied for funding for the second stage of the project. Further cooperation is to focus on, for instance, development of the project's website, preparation of brochures for tourists, and finding new partners. The objective is to preserve and spread the knowledge of European history connected with the Second World War and boost tourism in the participant towns and regions by promoting their memorial sites and cultural institutions. Launched in September 2015, the second stage is to continue for 18 months. The first meeting of the partners organised within its framework was held in Kent (Great Britain) in September 2015.

Liberation Route Europe is a project undertaken by the Museum of the Second World War and its partners from the Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, France, and Belgium. Its purpose is to collect, in one place, information about the events connected with the Second World War in Europe and its end, and to present the often disparate experiences of inhabitants of the countries it affected. Designed within the framework of the project, the www.liberationroute.com website and the mobile app are available in the languages of all the partners. Both of them enable their users to quickly access information about the most important events, places, and also persons connected with the course, end, and consequences of the Second World War in Europe.

The Museum's employees during a study visit to the History Museum in Luborn, Ukraine.
Photo: Waldemar Kowalski

The Museum's employees during a visit to the Polish Military Cemetery at Monte Cassino.
Photo: Krystyna Jaworska



Aside from the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, the project was undertaken by: the Liberation Route Europe Foundation and Gemeente Arnhem from Holland, 44 Screens and Région Basse-Normandie from France, Visit Kent and Spirit of Remembrance from Great Britain, Allied Museum Berlin and Rureifel-Tourismus from Germany, and the Tempora company (Bastogne War Museum) from Belgium.

Factual and organisational supervision of the Information Centre at the Polish War Cemetery at Monte Cassino

By order of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, in 2015 the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk began to prepare itself for taking over the factual and organisational supervision of the Information Centre at the Polish War Cemetery at Monte Cassino. One of the tasks it was given was to develop the multimedia content of the Centre and the nearby museums, and also to maintain contacts with Italian partners. In April 2015 our Deputy Director Professor Piotr M. Majewski and Doctor Jan Szkudliński visited the Information Centre at Monte Cassino to see the existing exhibition and establish contacts with partners. We are currently waiting for the Ministry's decision as to the further exhibition-educational activities at Monte Cassino.

Cooperation with foreign institutions and obtainment of exhibits

An important aspect of our activity is our cooperation with other institutions, which proves valuable particularly with regard to obtainment of exhibits and archival materials, conservation, storage of the collection, and reaching witnesses of history. In 2015 the Museum continued its cooperation with,



*The Museum's employees during a study visit to the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg.
Photo: Ewgenia Suslowa*

instance, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in World War II (former Museum of the Great Patriotic War), museums of occupations in Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius, and the Battle of the Atlantic Museum in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We also entered into cooperation with other institutions, including the National Museum in Astana, the Karagandy State University, and the Museum of Political Repression Victims' Memory of the Dolinka Settlement near Karagandy (Kazakhstan), the Museum of Partisan Glory in Łopatiewo, the Historical-Ethnographic Museum in Sarny, and the Ethnographic Museum in Rivne (Ukraine), and the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg (Russia).

Our cooperation with American museums, which we began last year, has already brought the first effects. The National World War II Museum in New Orleans included Poland and Gdańsk in the programme of historical trips to places connected with the Second World War, which it has prepared every year for American tourists. Furthermore, during our talks with the World War II Museum in Natick near Boston it was agreed that our Museum would be able to obtain incredibly rare iconographic materials from its collection.

Rheinmetall-Borsig typewriter donated to the Museum of the Second World War.



In 2015, owing to the mediation of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations, the Museum received a typewriter donated by Zofia Miśkiewicz-Peters. In August 1939 Maria Młyńska, who worked in Gdańsk and Gdynia for the Gdynia America Line, went to London for a few weeks' training with her working tool – the most modern Rheinmetall-Borsig German typewriter with Polish fonts. The outbreak of the war found her in London. Młyńska spent the next couple of years working for the Polish government, using her typewriter throughout that time.



About the Museum

Its creation

The idea of setting up a museum that would present the history of Poland in 1939–1945 against a broad European background was presented by Prime Minister Donald Tusk in December 2007. Gdańsk – the city where the war broke out – was chosen to be the seat of the institution.

The Museum of the Second World War came into being with a directive of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski and began its operations on 1 December 2008. Less than a year later, on Westerplatte, during celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, the Polish Prime Minister signed the Museum's foundation act.

The Museum of the Second World War is a national institution of culture accountable to the minister of culture and national heritage and listed in the State Museum Register.

Mission and objectives

The mission of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk is to create a modern institution presenting the history of the war as the biggest catastrophe of the 20th century. One of the main objectives of the Museum is to show the world the war experiences of Poland and other countries in Central-Eastern Europe, in many ways different and largely unknown in Western Europe and non-European countries.

Management

Professor Paweł Machcewicz serves as the director of the Museum, with Dr Janusz Marszałec and Professor Piotr M. Majewski as his deputies.

Staff

In 2015 the average employment calculated as full-time jobs and remunerated within the framework of specific subsidy for the ongoing activity was **42**.

Last year we had two interns, two volunteers, and one intern sent by the County Labour Office.

Financial information

The Museum of the Second World War is funded by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The Museum's budget for 2015 was:

■ **8 173 350 PLN** of subsidy spent on the **ongoing activity** (exhibitions; enrichment of the collections; conservation, preservation, and digitalisation of the objects in the collections; educational, research, and publishing activity; and popularisation of the Museum's activity)

■ **88 027 397 PLN** of subsidy spent on **investments** connected with the long-term programme "Construction of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk".

In 2015 the Prime Minister signed two Acts amending the Act on the establishment of the long-term programme "Construction of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk".

1. Act 53/2015 of 21 April 2015, which increased the long-term Programme's funding by 90,500,000 PLN and changed the period of its execution to 2011–2016.
2. Act 207/2015 of 30 October 2015, which changed the Programme's execution period to 2011–2017.

Moreover, the Museum spent its subsidy ear-marked for other investments in the sum of **282,249 PLN** on:

1. Construction of a CCTV system on the Westerplatte Peninsula – 176,383 PLN
2. Purchase of exhibition showcases and glass covers – 101,057 PLN
3. Development of the wireless humidity and temperature monitoring system in the collection store-rooms – 4,809 PLN

Board of Trustees and Advisory Board

The operation of the Museum of the Second World War is supported by two mutually independent advisory bodies – the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Board, which are composed of eminent historians from Poland, Great Britain, the United States, France, Germany and Russia and Israel also museum specialists, lawyers, journalists, and veterans.

The Board of Trustees was established on 13 April 2012 by Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski. Its current members are:

- **Professor Bogdan Chrzanowski**, employee of Museum Stutthof, deputy dean of the Social Sciences Faculty of the University of Gdańsk, chairman of the Board,
- **Dr Piotr M.A. Cywiński**, Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum director,
- **Lieutenant-Colonel Tadeusz Filipkowski**, deputy chairman of the executive board of the World Society of Home Army Soldiers, former chairman of the board of the Home Army Film Foundation,
- **Grzegorz Fortuna**, *30 Dni* periodical editor-in-chief,
- **Dr Jarosław Krawczyk**, art historian,
- **Professor Jack Lohman**, art historian, museologist, Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) director,
- **Professor Krzysztof Mikulski**, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń lecturer,
- **Jacek Miler**, director of the Department of Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage,
- **Professor Zdzisław Najder**, literature historian,
- **Jacek Taylor**, lawyer, member of the Council of Trustees of the Ossoliński National Institute in Wrocław, member of the board of the European Solidarity Centre,
- **Dorota Zawacka-Wakarecy**, chairwoman of the General Elżbieta Zawacka Foundation, Pomeranian Archive and Museum of the Home Army and Polish Women's Military Service.

Prof. Władysław Bartoszewski and Prof. Jerzy Holzer, members of the Education Committee, died in 2015.

Meeting of the Advisory Board, 2 September 2015. Photo: Roman Jocher



The Advisory Board was appointed on 18 May 2008. Its current members are:

- **Professor Norman Davies**, British Academy, chairman of the Board,
- **Professor Élie Barnavi**, Tel Aviv University,
- **Professor Jerzy W. Borejsza**, Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences,
- **Professor Włodzimierz Borodziej**, Institute of History of the Warsaw University,
- **Professor Andrzej Chwalba**, Institute of History of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow,
- **Professor Ulrich Herbert**, University of Freiburg, School of History of the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies,
- **Professor Pavel Polian**, Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academic Library of the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow,
- **Professor Krzysztof Pomian**, Museum of Europe in Brussels,
- **Professor Henry Rousso**, Institute for Contemporary History in Paris, National Centre for Scientific Research in Paris, Paris West University Nanterre La Défense,
- **Professor Timothy D. Snyder**, Yale University,
- **Professor Tomasz Szarota**, Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences.
- **Professor Anna Wolff-Powęska**, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

In 2015 we bid farewell to two eminent historians and members of the **Advisory Board Professor Władysław Bartoszewski** and **Professor Jerzy Holzer**.



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