

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Rescue Memory - Activism, Arts and Public Remembrance (ReActMem)
Participant:	Fundacja Urban Memory (UMF)
PIC number:	890263570

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	WP 36		
Event name:	Seminar on Multi-Directional Memory: <i>Non-obvious Wrocław – from Colonial Museum Collections to Forgotten Cemeteries</i>		
Type:	Seminar: curatorial tour & panel discussion		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Poland, Wrocław		
Date(s):	18 September, 2025		
Website(s) (if any):	https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/en/blog/event/entangled/		
Participants			
Female:	27		
Male:	7		
Non-binary:	1		
From country 1 [Poland]:	35		
Total number of participants:	35	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>On September 18, 2025 UMF organized in cooperation with the Museum of the University of Wrocław an academic seminar titled “Non-obvious Wrocław – from Colonial Museum Collections to Forgotten Cemeteries”, an event which was also included in the program of the Lower Silesian Science Festival (Dolnośląski Festiwal Nauki). It brought together scholars, museum professionals, activists, and members of the general public interested in issues of decolonization, contested memory, ethics of exhibiting sensitive collections as well as history and identity of the city of Wrocław. The seminar continued the conversation initiated during the 2024 international conference <i>“Sensitive Legacy in University Collections: Between Adaptation and Restitution”</i> (part of another CERV-funded project, MultiMemo).</p> <p>The program consisted of two parts:</p>			

1. **Curatorial tour** of the exhibition *“Entangled: Former Non-European Ethnographic Collections of the University of Wrocław,”* led by Dr Urszula Bończuk-Dawidziuk (Museum of the University of Wrocław). The exhibit examined the history and legacy of the former Anthropological–Ethnographic Museum in Breslau and its non-European collections acquired in the context of German colonialism (1884–1919).
2. **Panel discussion** exploring themes of colonial heritage, forgotten cemeteries, and the ethics of remembrance. This part of the seminar gathered experts representing diverse scholars and disciplinary perspectives:
 - a. **Prof. Renata Tańczuk**, cultural studies scholar specializing in collecting practices (Institute of Cultural Studies, University of Wrocław).
 - b. **Agata Stasińska, MA**, co-curator of the exhibit “Entangled” (National Museum in Wrocław).
 - c. **Dr Alan Weiss**, representative of *Spod Ziemi Patrzy Breslau*, an initiative documenting traces of the past in contemporary Wrocław, particularly former German cemeteries.
 - d. **Dr Joanna Ślaga**, Deputy Director of the Jagiellonian University Museum, co-creator of ethical guidelines for the display of sensitive heritage.
 - e. **Moderator: Oliwia Mimi Bosomtwe, MA**, journalist and author of *“Jak biały człowiek”*.

During the “Non-obvious Wrocław” panel, participants discussed how Wrocław — formerly Breslau — confronts a past that is uncomfortable, forgotten, or deliberately erased. Researchers, museum professionals, and activists gathered to search for a language capable of addressing this complex history with care and attentiveness. The *“Entangled”* exhibition served as a starting point for reflecting on the fate of the city’s non-European collections, many of which came from former German colonies and now return to public debate not merely as artifacts but as witnesses of history.

The conversation on former German cemeteries revealed how easily memory can become invisible: once destroyed and transformed into parks, these sites still hold human remains and individual stories beneath the surface, now being rediscovered through grassroots initiatives that restore their presence in the urban landscape. Participants proposed shifting from the notion of “difficult heritage” to “sensitive legacy,” emphasizing the inherited, intertwined Polish, German, and Jewish histories that shape the city. The discussion also addressed highly sensitive objects—such as facial casts, gravestones with swastikas, or everyday items from concentration camps—which challenge viewers to confront the boundary between remembrance and erasure, scientific inquiry and dehumanization.

A key outcome of the event was the creation of an interdisciplinary space where academic perspectives, curatorial experience and grassroots memory work could meet. The discussion deepened understanding of how colonial-era ethnographic collections and forgotten German cemeteries shape the city’s contemporary landscape of memory. Audience members actively participated through questions, reflections and personal accounts connected to local history, demonstrating a strong societal need to address sensitive and marginalised heritage in this part of Poland. Many participants emphasized the importance of making hidden layers of Wrocław visible and accessible, not only within museums but also in public space. Their contributions broadened the scope of the discussion and highlighted the potential for community-based research and educational initiatives. The conversation was recorded and a video was released in December 2025 and shared with a wider audience via UMF social media.

Collaboration with: National Museum in Wrocław, Lower Silesian Science Festival (Dolnośląski Festiwal Nauki), University of Wrocław

Communication links:

[facebook event and registration](#), [facebook event reminder](#), [facebook post-event pics](#), [facebook post-event summary and video recording](#), [video recording](#) from the panel discussion published on YouTube.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).
2.0	19.02.2025	Change the delivery date from due date July, 2025 due date December, 2025
3.0	1.07.2025	Change of location: Würzburg → Wrocław, change of description & language: Seminar in Würzburg (Germany), in German → Public event in Wrocław (Poland), in Polish, change of WP lead: JMU → UMF