

## Call for Papers

### Musealization of Heimatstuben and Heimat-collections of refugees, expellees and repatriates

Conference of the Museumsverband für Niedersachsen und Bremen e.V. (MVNB) in cooperation with the Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa (BKGE)

September 21-23, 2022 in Oldenburg, Germany

Heimatstuben are collections and meeting places with reference to local history. The Heimatstuben of refugees, expellees and repatriates represent a special form of volunteer run local history museums, which has emerged in the FRG since the 1950s. Supported by a special form of partnerships (Patenschaften) of West German municipalities, refugees and expellees collected mementos of their regions of origin or a generally constructed "East German" homeland. The Heimat-collections contain objects that were taken along during flight and expulsion, as well as objects that came into the collections later. In the course of demographic change, the proportion of those who actively use the Heimatstuben is steadily decreasing, while on the other hand the collections are increasingly expanding due to bequests. Many parlor caretaker can no longer maintain the operation of their Heimatstuben. How can the culturally and historically significant objects be transferred to other institutions, so that the memories of refugees, expellees and repatriates can be incorporated into the collective memory? Are Heimat-collections as a mass phenomenon as a result of flight and expulsion only a German specificity or are there parallels in other countries? Is a remembrance of the fate of German refugees, expellees and repatriates only possible on a local, regional, national or also on a transnational and European level and how could this look like?

Since 1966 there had already been several surveys on Patenschaften and Heimatstuben. The Museumsverband für Niedersachsen und Bremen (MVNB) took up the topic for the first time in the 1980s. From 2008-2010, within the framework of a nationwide survey initiated by the Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa (BKGE) and implemented at the Seminar for European Ethnology at the University of Kiel, a comprehensive registration of all parlors of refugees, expellees and repatriates residing in Germany was carried out. The result was, in addition to the scientific reappraisal<sup>1</sup>, a database<sup>2</sup> which was created by the BKGE and has been maintained since then. In 2019, this was followed by a project<sup>3</sup> funded by the Landesbeauftragte für Heimatvertriebene, Spätaussiedlerinnen und Spätaussiedler to advise parlor caretakers, from which the project "Herkunft.Heimat.Heute. Sustainable Safeguarding of Lower Saxony's Home Collections from the Historic East German Territories"<sup>4</sup> has emerged, which has been running since 2020, and which is funded in equal parts by the state of Lower Saxony and the federal government.

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<sup>1</sup> Cornelia Eisler, *Verwaltete Erinnerung – symbolische Politik. Die Heimatsammlungen der deutschen Flüchtlinge, Vertriebenen und Aussiedler* (Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa, Band 57), München 2015.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bkge.de/Heimatsammlungen/Verzeichnis/> .

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Magen (Hrsg.), *Heimaterinnerungen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Ein Projekt zur Zukunft der niedersächsischen Heimatsammlungen aus den historisch ostdeutschen Gebieten* (Schriftenreihe des Museumsverbandes Niedersachsen und Bremen e. V., Bd. 4), Hannover 2019.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mvnb.de/museumsverband/unsere-projekte/herkunft-heimat-heute> ; Barbara Magen/Natalie Reinsch (Hrsg.), *Vom Ihr zum Wir. Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene im Niedersachsen der Nachkriegszeit* (Schriften des Museumsverbandes Niedersachsen und Bremen e. V., Bd. 5), Hannover 2021.

The conference on the musealization of Heimatstuben and Heimat-collections marks the conclusion of the three-year project and is dedicated to scientific models of analysis as well as museum concepts. Three panels offer the opportunity to present these in lectures:

- Panel 1: Integration of Heimatstuben and Heimat-collections into local and regional museums
- Panel 2: Flight and expulsion in the mirror of thematically superordinate exhibitions, documentation centers etc.
- Panel 3: Transnational cooperation: Returning Heimat-collections to the regions of origin (Poland, Czech Republic etc.) and comparable phenomena of remembrance culture in Europe, such as Eastern Polish remembrance culture

Among the questions to be discussed are the challenges faced by exhibition organizers in dealing with this topic, how potential solutions might look like, how flight and expulsion as a result of the Second World War can be portrayed, and how a historically appropriate, socially acceptable consensus can be found between different narratives.

**Please send your abstract (max. 2,000 characters) to**

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**Abstract submission deadline: May 31, 2022**

In particular, young scientists are cordially invited to participate with a contribution. The presentations are scheduled for 30 minutes, each followed by a discussion (15 minutes). Each panel will be concluded with an additional discussion on the panel topic. The conference language is German, individual presentations can be given in English if required. The contributions will be published in a conference volume. To ensure timely publication by the end of 2022, the deadline for submission of manuscripts is bindingly set until 14.10.2022.

**Conference Location:** Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen (BKGE), Johann-Justus-Weg 147a, 26127 Oldenburg, Germany.

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