

The forgotten metamuseological concepts of Wojciech Gluziński

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Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo, 2022, 10:1:19-31

DOI: 10.46284/mkd.2022.10.1.2

The forgotten metamuseological concepts of Wojciech Gluziński

Wojciech Gluziński's metamuseological concepts, developed in the 1960s and 1970s, found their fullest expression in the book *U podstaw muzeologii* [On the fundamentals of museology] from 1980. Its author was then considered to be one of the pioneers of museological theory in the world. Nevertheless, he is now almost forgotten. This is evidenced by the latest publications of ICOFOM dealing with the history of twentieth-century museology, which exclude Gluziński. The reason for this lack is the language barrier, which makes it difficult to evaluate his achievements in terms of content. The recognition of this state of affairs was the reason for the preparation of this review article using the methods of analysis and criticism of the literature, for which the basis was sources and studies available only in Polish. The basic questions boiled down to how Gluziński understood the museum and what, according to him, the subject of museology was. The answer to the first question was the concept of a "pure" museum, while to the second, the concept of "museum sense".

Keywords: Wojciech Gluziński, museum sense, pure museum, history of museology, twentieth-century museology

Motto

"Therefore, I am convinced that the thesis that he will present to us at the end of his PhD research will be a serious contribution to the theory of museology and will contribute to raising our authority among the world's theoreticians in this field."

– Opinion of Kazimierz Malinowski about Wojciech Gluziński of March 25, 1973.

Introduction

The 1970s and 1980s were a time when researchers from the then Eastern bloc countries dominated in museology. In addition to museologists from Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, the Polish metamuseologist Wojciech Gluziński¹ played an important

¹ Dr Wojciech Antoni Janusz Gluziński, (born March 31, 1922 in Lviv; died March 26, 2017 in Wrocław) – Polish philosopher and museologist; obtained his master's degree in philosophy on the basis of the thesis entitled *Teoria spostrzeżenia u Bergsona* [Perception theory in Bergson's work], defended in 1952 at the University of Wrocław; he obtained his doctorate on the basis of a dissertation written under the supervision of Prof. Kazimierz Malinowski and defended on December 15, 1976 at the Institute of Historic Studies and Conservation of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń; curator of the National Museum in Wrocław; associate of the Polish National Committee of ICOM. More on Gluziński's biography: GAJEWSKA-PROROK, Elżbieta. Wojciech Antoni Janusz Gluziński. In: *Muzealnictwo*, 58, 2017, pp. 292–295.

role in creating the theoretical foundations of the emerging discipline. The discussion forum was then the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and from 1977 the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM). The texts published since 1983 as part of the ICOFOM Study Series testify to the development of the then museology. Thanks to the use of the so-called congressional languages (English, French and Spanish), they remain accessible to a wide audience. They are mainly in short forms, which may make it difficult to comprehensively reconstruct the theoretical standpoints of individual museologists. This problem concerns, for example, Gluziński, in whose case only 2 out of 14 publications from 1983–1991 are 11 pages long, while the rest are just a few.² A separate issue is that none of the articles published by the Polish museologist as part of the *ICOFOM Study Series* have been devoted to the concepts of a “pure” museum and “museum sense”, which were an important part of his research from the 1960s. In order to get to know them, one should therefore refer to his doctoral dissertation entitled “Filozoficzne i metodologiczne podstawy muzeologii” [The philosophical and methodological foundations of museology] from 1976, published under the changed title *U podstaw muzeologii* [On the fundamentals of museology] in 1980. The language barrier meant (and still does) that the concepts presented in it had no chance to exist outside Poland, and their author was forgotten. This is evidenced by the latest ICOFOM publications dealing with the history of twentieth-century museology, which exclude Gluziński. A representative example is the collective work from 2019, entitled *A history of museology: Key authors of museological theory*, edited by current ICOFOM Chairman Bruno Bralon Soares.³

The recognition of this state of affairs was the reason for the preparation of this review article using the methods of source criticism and analysis of the literature available only in Polish, dedicated to foreign recipients. The study was based on the book *U podstaw muzeologii* and articles by Gluziński which appeared before the date of its publication in 1980. Moreover, the work uses archival documents from Gluziński’s doctoral dissertation in the form of unpublished opinions by Kazimierz Malinowski and Jerzy Topolski. However, they turned out to be too synthetic, thus contributing little to the substantive evaluation of the presented concepts. On the other hand, two texts by Maria Bartko, published in *Muzealnictwo* in 1982 and 1984, concerning the book, including a polemic with its author, had a much greater critical potential.

Following Gluziński’s advice on the technique of writing a thesis, the article uses extensive quotations from sources and studies, “primarily to avoid being accused of subjectivity”.⁴ The point was therefore to precisely reflect the style of academic writing of the Polish museologist and to be faithful to his concepts. The basic questions boiled down to how Gluziński understood the museum and what, according to him, the subject of museology was.

Museum and the subject of museology

According to Gluziński, museology is not the science of the museum treated as a “device” used to achieve secondary goals. An extreme example of such a goal is the call: “Instead

² Data based on the list of Gluziński’s publications as part of the *ICOFOM Study Series*, prepared by Elżbieta Gajewska-Prorok in: GAJEWSKA-PROROK, Wojciech ..., p. 294–295.

³ One of the few researchers who refer to Gluziński’s publications is Jan Dolák, as exemplified by his book *Teoretická podstata muzeologie* from 2019.

⁴ GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech. *U podstaw muzeologii*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1980, p. 15.

of going to a beer hall, [to] bring people to the ‘museum’”.⁵ It makes the museum a centre of social life and another form of cultural entertainment. This vision is in line with Alfred Kuhn’s slogan of “de-museuming the museum”, that is, reviving something that, by definition, opposes life.⁶ And although Kuhn himself and his concepts were forgotten, after World War II some museologists began to construct (and actually reconstruct) his postulates. Education was brought to the fore. Something previously reserved for students of art academies has become generally available. “In terms of pars pro toto, the educational functions of museology began to be perceived as its essence and the sole purpose of its mission, which in turn led to a purely *intamental* understanding of the essence of museology” (typography preserved from original).⁷ The museum as a place of entertainment or education has become one of the many institutions that entertain and educate. Thus the museum has lost its specificity. Opposing the self-destruction of the museum, Duncan F. Cameron acknowledged, and Gluziński picked it up, that the museum should “become itself”.⁸ The point was therefore to “museumise” the museum, that is, return to what constitutes its essence.⁹

The museum evolved from collecting, which “would have continued to develop (...) as a noble mania of collecting beautiful, extraordinary and ancient things, if, on the one hand, the society had not demanded access to the collections, and on the other, if scholars had not started to search for materials for themselves in them”.¹⁰ The museum, therefore, as a historical phenomenon, appeared at a specific stage in the development of Western civilisation. The context of time and place is fundamental to understanding both the circumstances of its creation and its present condition. There are, however, some constants that are of a foundational nature – they constitute the archetype of the museum. Gluziński uses the term “pure” museum (1980) here, which is analogous to Cameron’s “real museum” (French: *un vrai musée*).¹¹ To explain the essence of the “pure” museum, Gluziński postulates the rejection of contemporary frames of reference and a return to the reading of early museologists. He considers Samuel Quiccheberg, the author of the treatise entitled *Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri Amplissimi* from 1565, as a pioneer of museology. To describe the subject of his considerations, the scholar from Antwerp also uses the word *promptuarium*, which – to quote T. Volbehr (1909) – the Polish museologist translates as a “visualizer” (Polish: “uwidacznialnia”).¹² The recognition by Gluziński (after German-speaking authors) of Quiccheberg’s pioneering role does not raise

⁵ GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech. Muzeum – przedmiot muzealny. Podstawowe pojęcia muzeologii. In: D. Cicha (ed.), *Z problematyki badań nad działalnością oświatową muzeów: Materiały wydane z okazji 9-tej konferencji generalnej ICOM Poznań*. Polski Komitet Narodowy ICOM, Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu, 1971, p. 38.

⁶ KUHN, Alfred. Aufgaben der Museen in der Gegenwart. In: *Museumskunde*, 15, 1922 [probably Gluziński meant the publication from 1920], p. 29, after: GLUZIŃSKI, Muzeum ..., pp. 37–38.

⁷ GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech. O problematyce badań nad działalnością oświatową muzeów. In: D. Cicha (ed.), *Z problematyki badań nad działalnością oświatową muzeów: Materiały wydane z okazji 9-tej konferencji generalnej ICOM Poznań*. Polski Komitet Narodowy ICOM, Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu, 1971, p. 93.

⁸ CAMERON, David F. Le musée et le monde contemporain. In: *Les Nouvelles de l'ICOM*, 23(2), 1970, p. 3, after: GLUZIŃSKI, Muzeum ..., p. 39.

⁹ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 93.

¹⁰ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 215.

¹¹ CAMERON, Le musée ..., p. 3.

¹² GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 268.

any doubts in the light of the current findings.¹³ What is more important than the issue of priority, however, is that Gluziński focuses his attention mainly on the relationship of “showing things that, as extendable, must occupy a certain space”.¹⁴ By signalling the concepts of other authors, including Cladius Clemens (1635), John D. Major (1674), Daniel W. Moller (1704), and Leonhard Ch. Sturm (1704), and citing a few examples of encyclopaedic entries, Gluziński states that in the approach of early museologists: “the museum can be understood simply as a s t r u c t u r e d and v i s u a l i s e d set of things. Thus things are its essential component, the institutional status and organisational form – only its accidental components”.¹⁵ This collection is not accidental, and the view prepared in a museum differs from the “everyday view” in that it is: intentional, orderly, repetitive and comprehensive.¹⁶ The essence of the museum understood in this way is the link between collecting and visualising the collection (Fig. 1).

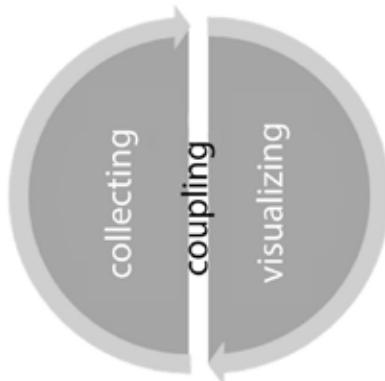


Fig. 1: *The essence of a “pure” museum according to Wojciech Gluziński (1980)*

Source: comp. M. Lorenc on the basis of: GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech (1980). *U podstaw muzeologii* [On the fundamentals of museology]. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, pp. 266–292.

This is the definition of a “pure” museum that avoids teleological interpretations. The coupling between the collection and the visualisation, however, requires an answer to the question about “the causative cause of this set”. It is not the creation of “stocks” or the possession of a specific feature by a material object.¹⁷ At the root is the need to know. However, it is not about scientific cognition, but about intuitive cognition, which Gluziński ascribes to the order of the museum (Tab. 1).

The museum – unlike science – gives priority to the rules of the show. Viewing things at an exhibition is accompanied by a specific emotional experience, which differs from the intellectual experience and cannot be reduced only to sensual experiences. According to Gluziński: “Here [in the museum – M. L.] emotional experiences with a sensory-intellectual component accompanying the seeing of things facilitate the spontaneous crystallisation of the experience of humanistic values, and in a feeling that can be compared with enlightenment”.¹⁸

¹³ MAIRESSE, François, DESVALLÉES, André. Muzeologia. In: A. Desvallées, F. Maïresse (eds), D. Folga-Januszewska (Polish ed.), *Słownik encyklopedyczny muzeologii*, Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2020, p. 306; cf. BRAKENSIEK, Stephan. Samuel Quicchelberg: Gründungsvater oder Einzeltäter? Zur Intention der Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri amplissimi (1565) und ihrer Rezeption im Sammlungswesen Europas zwischen 1550 und 1820. In: *metaphorik.de*, 14, 2008, pp. 231–252, accessed April 14, 2021, https://www.metaphorik.de/sites/www.metaphorik.de/files/journal-pdf/14_2008_brakensiek.pdf.

¹⁴ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 269.

¹⁵ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 270.

¹⁶ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 285.

¹⁷ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 292.

¹⁸ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 281.

Tab. 1: Features of scientific cognition and intuitive cognition characteristic of the order of the museum according to Wojciech Gluziński (1980)

Scientific cognition	Intuitive cognition
discursive, conceptual	visual / sensual
intellectual	emotional
subject to methodological rigors	existential cognition (the existence of things is directly stated) and individual (individuals or sets are discovered)
focused on common and ordinary phenomena object	directed towards things that are rare, unusual and peculiar
a conceptual model of reality, represented by the system of scientific knowledge result	the visibility of the existence of things and their quality, expressed in an emotional and evaluative relationship
the object of cognition – the cognising subject – the conceptual model of cognition scheme	the object of cognition – the cognising subject – a concrete image of the object, tinged with an emotional and evaluative experience

Source: comp. M. Lorenc on the basis of: GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech (1980). U podstaw muzeologii [On the fundamentals of museology]. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, pp. 277–292.

The coupling of collecting and visualising (making visible) “contains the greatest amount of museum sense, as it is a direct manifestation of structure-creating behaviours”.¹⁹ It is the “museological sense” that constitutes the subject of museology (Fig. 2).

The museum sense – in other words, “being museum-like” – is a feature that does not belong *ex natura*, but results from “the objectification of the idea of museology”.²⁰ Museology is understood by Gluziński – in the spirit of Georges Henri Rivière – as collecting, storing, processing and displaying museum exhibits. “This four-part logical sum, and only this one determines museology. (...) And it is this organic relationship of the four functions that determines the *s p e c i f i c c h a r a c t e r* of museology, and determines the specificity of each component function”.²¹ The subject of museology is therefore the study of behaviours that make up museology, treated as a whole. Collecting without visualisation is devoid of any museum sense. “We will therefore say that the museum sense is not in the changing elements, but beyond them, in the structure they are composed of, in the relations in which they appear in it with respect to each other. Their sense (...) is the reflected sense of the structure”.²²

But what does “objectification of the idea of museology” mean? Gluziński replies that it is the result of structure-creating behaviours – external and internal, which condition each other. They result in specific creations. Behaviours vary in meaning. Primary and causative are those that constitute the essence of the “pure” museum. “The collecting function leads

¹⁹ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 376.

²⁰ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 368.

²¹ GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech. Problemy współczesnego muzealnictwa. In: *Roczniki Etnografii Śląskiej*, 2, 1963, p. 209.

²² GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 369.

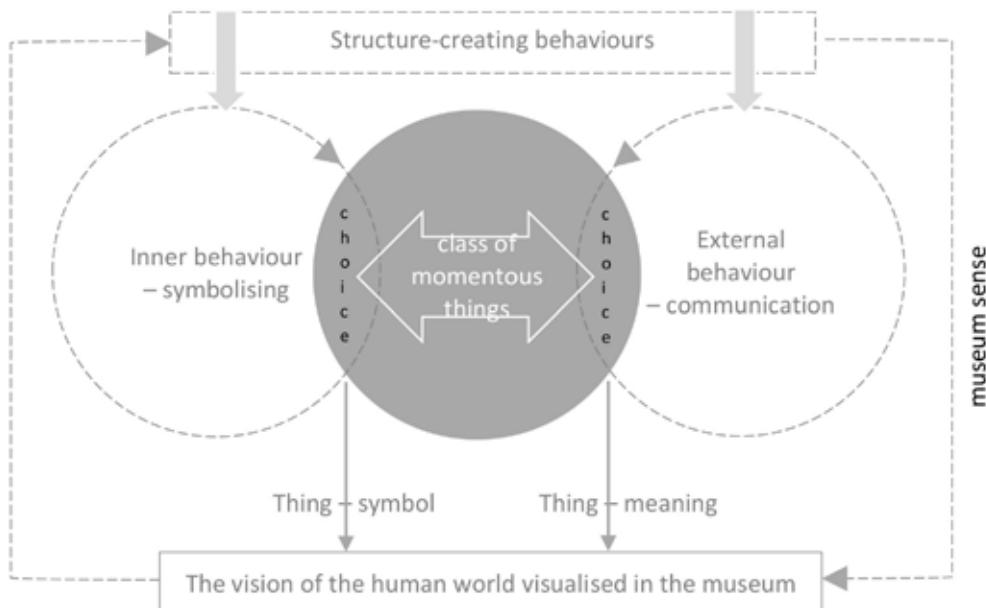


Fig. 2: The subject of museology according to Wojciech Gluziński (1980)

Source: comp. M. Lorenc on the basis of: GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech (1980). *U podstaw muzeologii* [On the fundamentals of museology]. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, pp. 368–378.

us in a straight line to the symbolisation relation, which is a necessary condition for it, the function of visualising to communicating what is visualised, which is its result".²³ The external – symbolising – behaviour consists in choosing from the class of momentous objects those that are to symbolise them (thing – symbol). The selection is made on the basis of axiological criteria. The internal – communicative – behaviours choose significant things as signs from the same class of things. While circulating, both types of behaviour form an "active and causative core of museology as a specific structure of behaviour".²⁴

Gluziński and his contemporary metamuseological "landscape"

According to Gluziński, "the need for museology is an undeniable fact for museums".²⁵ However, he does not mean its practical aspects – collecting and displaying exhibits – but an independent academic discipline – museology that studies the behaviours specific to museums. This in turn must meet the criteria of scientificity, that is, have a theory and proper research methods. It is therefore necessary to develop a metamuseology focused on the structure of museological theory and the ways of justifying it.²⁶ The general museological theory – in line with Gluziński's concept of metamuseology – should be divided into two parts: (a) the theory of the museum object (the theory of museal collection) and (b) the theory of what is visualised (the theory of museum exhibition). "On the grounding of theory, the typically museological facts appear significantly and there, the selection of the phenomena occurring in the objective domain of museology will be selected. Only some of them, as such facts, will remain in the

²³ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 372.

²⁴ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 373.

²⁵ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 179.

²⁶ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 180.

focus of the interests of the museological discipline".²⁷ Assessing according to these criteria, Gluziński states that "today's museology is not a science, but is only in the initial stage of its development".²⁸ At the same time, Gluziński recognises the leading role of museologists from the Eastern bloc countries in their efforts to change the status quo. The Polish museologist explains this as an "important cultural, ideological and educational role" ascribed to museums in socialist countries.²⁹ Among the museologists engaged in theoretical reflection on the discipline, he mentions: Jiří Neustupný (Prague), Zbyněk Z. Stránský (Brno), the authors of *Theses* (*Diskussionsbeiträge*, 1964)³⁰ and Eberhard Czichon (East Berlin) and his associates.³¹ According to Gluziński, "these are the only concepts that exist in museology today," assuming that it is not about every reflection on museology, but about "the self-knowledge of museology, its methodological reflection on itself".³² While he considers Neustupný a pioneer in this subject, he gives Stránský the greatest merit in it. This confirms the leading role of the Czechs in museological theorising. Neustupný's concept, assuming the existence of general and specialised museology, is described by Gluziński as pluralistic and disintegrative.³³ Above all, however, in his opinion, it is burdened with the error of ahistoricism, which the Polish museologist sees in giving priority to individual academic disciplines, and not to museology. Meanwhile, "it was museumology that appeared before the creation of these specialised disciplines and contributed, in no small measure, to their consolidation".³⁴ Museology, as proposed by Neustupný, cannot become independent, as it plays an auxiliary role in relation to other academic disciplines present in a museum. This makes it only a theory and methodology of museum work.³⁵

Opposite to some of the assumptions of the Prague museologist is – according to Gluziński – the concept of the East German authors of *Theses*, which he calls monistic and documentalist.³⁶ It makes the museum one of the methods of research documentation, next to archives and libraries. Gluziński considers that the basic error of this concept is "the inclusion of the research of testimonies in the tasks of museology".³⁷ The problem here is also the inappropriate use of concepts. The authors of *Theses* use the term "methodology" to refer to the methodology of museum work, which includes: inventory, cataloguing, conservation etc. Meanwhile, museumology is not working in a museum, just as "soap production is not the practice of chemistry, although it uses chemistry knowledge".³⁸ A separate issue is the subject of museum documentation, which for the authors of *Theses* are "material testimonies" (German:

²⁷ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 451.

²⁸ BARTKO, Maria, GLUZIŃSKI, Wojciech. Polemika między Autorem a Recenzentką w związku z książką *U podstaw muzeologii*. In: *Muzealnictwo*, 28–29, 1984, p. 181.

²⁹ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 179, note 2.

³⁰ Gluziński is referring to the team from the Central Centre of Regional Museums (German: Zentrale Fachstelle für Heimatmuseen), which developed the theoretical assumptions of museology and published them as a contribution to the discussion, in the form of an appendix to the 1964 issue of the journal *Neue Museumskunde*.

³¹ Gluziński includes among them B. Hellmuth and J. Winkler – co-authors of *Über den Charakter der Museologie* (1966) in: GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 179.

³² GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 179.

³³ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 195.

³⁴ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 195.

³⁵ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 196.

³⁶ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 201.

³⁷ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 199.

³⁸ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 201.

*Originale Sachzeuge).*³⁹ “Thus, at first, they are just things that appear as testimonies only when they are recognised in this role. A thing is an element of objective reality, a material testimony is a way of recognition of this element”.⁴⁰

There are therefore differences, but also formal similarities between the concepts of Neustupný and the authors of *Thesei*. Both approaches are scientific and practical. Similar allegations are formulated by Gluziński with reference to “Czichon’s group”,⁴¹ whose proposals he calls “semantic museology”.⁴² According to this concept, the subject of museology is “the semantic structure of museum objects understood as primary sources”.⁴³ Primary sources are information that is characterised by “the unity of the material carrier, that is the sign and its semantic function, in relation to our consciousness. (...) It is on this semantic relationship between the informational aspect of matter and consciousness that the social role of the museum focuses in its general logical tasks and historical functions”.⁴⁴ The museum performs cognitive functions for the purposes of various academic disciplines, thanks to which it occupies a special place between research and education. Moreover, this institution performs social functions subordinated – according to the Marxist interpretation – to the ideology of the ruling class.

The Polish museologist criticises Czechoslovak and East German authors for “inconsistency” and “methodological indiscipline” resulting from their treating museology as practical knowledge serving museum work. Against this background – according to Gluziński – Stránský stands out *in plus*, as contrary to the dominant trends in museology at that time, he opposes the identification of this discipline with the study of museums and its functions. Instead, he suggests looking for the subject of museology in the sphere of the museum’s purpose, and warns against confusing the means with the end. According to Stránský, the museum is a device the sense of which should be considered in two dimensions internal, related to the activity of creating collections, and external, mainly limited to exhibitions, and then to educational activities. Like Neustupný, he distinguishes between general and specialised museology. He is interested in the former, dealing with the history of museology and museography, and above all – documentation, thesaurisation and museum communication. He leaves aside specialist museology and – unlike the Prague museologist – he considers that they are not used to apply other disciplines to the museum, but to construct interdisciplinary issues (e.g. museohistory).

The subject of museology *sensu stricto*, unlike the methodology of museum work (museography), is for the Brno museologist “museum character”. As Gluziński claims, according to Stránský, it is “a certain complex of features which together constitute a specific aspect, a certain side of reality. Thus, it is not an independent phenomenon, but is always associated with specific objects that are its carriers”.⁴⁵ Thus, it constitutes a specific quality of the object, and at the same time it results from the intention of the person who makes a choice. Gluziński is critical of this concept and compares it to the erroneous theory of phlogiston: “Something is burning, so there is a mysterious element of flammability called phlogiston –

³⁹ Kazimierz Malinowski suggests the translation “original material witness”, stating at the same time that “we would say ‘material sources’” in MALINOWSKI, Kazimierz. Tezy do teorii muzeologii. In: *Muzealnictwo*, 14, 1967, p. 141.

⁴⁰ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 203.

⁴¹ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, pp. 213–214.

⁴² GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 203.

⁴³ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 208.

⁴⁴ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 207.

⁴⁵ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw ...*, p. 220.

something is collected by museums, therefore it has some property of museum character".⁴⁶ Meanwhile – in his opinion – the selection of an object for a collection cannot be justified by its having some feature of museum character, but only by referring to its various properties preferred depending on the intention of the subject making the choice.⁴⁷ Thus, "museum character" is not a permanent feature, as it is conditioned by circumstances and attributed to an object in a certain relationship. Stránský – according to Gluziński – "introduces [in this way – M. L.] a central theoretical term without a reliable, explicit definition. This term, devoid of any connection with observational terms, remains only a conceptual fiction".⁴⁸ Despite these comments, the Polish museologist appreciates Stránský's contribution to the development of the discipline and recognises him and Cameron as "ideologically close to him".⁴⁹ This statement seems to be an abuse, however, as the publications of these authors date back to 1965–1972,⁵⁰ and thus they are earlier in relation to most of the museological texts by Gluziński (including his books). Therefore, one should speak not so much of "ideological closeness" as of being inspired by their concepts.

Marginal resonance of Gluziński's concepts in Poland

Museology, contrary to the etymology of the word, is therefore not the science of the museum. All important museologists of that time represented this position. If not the museum, what is the subject of museology? According to Neustupny, it will be a direct document, for the authors of *Theses* – academic documentation, according to Czichon – a semantic structure of museum objects, while for Stránský – museum character. Gluziński answers this question that the subject of museology is the "museum sense". Maria Barto, in her review of Gluziński's book, asks whether this multiplicity of answers proves the development of museology as an academic discipline, or maybe "the impossibility to define the subject of research of the discipline she pursues".⁵¹ She claims that museology is not a science, but only a "highly specialized meta-philosophical reflection" in which the worldview function dominates the cognitive one.⁵² In her opinion, Gluziński combines the methodological dispositions of the key research orientations in the humanities of the time, including structuralism, hermeneutics and empiricism (along with concepts taken from phenomenologists, semiotics and logicians) and follows this scheme:

First it is stated that there is some reality (common sense empiricism) into which we have a detailed empirical insight (here, for example, the physical reality of a museum exhibition). Then it is said about this reality (hermeneutics) that it is a reality that has a specific sense for a human being (here, for example, museum sense); to finally say that the elements of this reality should be examined

⁴⁶ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 227.

⁴⁷ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 227.

⁴⁸ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 231. Introducing fuzzy definitions is still a problem in museology, an example of which is the ICOM proposal for a new definition of "museum" from Kyoto from 2019: LORENC, Magdalena. Polityczność nowej definicji muzeum ICOM, czyli manewrowanie transatlantykiem wśród gór lodowych. In: *Muzealnictwo*, 61, 2020, pp. 55–56.

⁴⁹ GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., p. 11.

⁵⁰ Time periods based on the bibliographic description of the publications by Cameron and Stránský included by Gluziński in the list of literature: GLUZIŃSKI, *U podstaw* ..., pp. 399–400, 403.

⁵¹ BARTKO, Maria. O tzw. scjentyzmie w muzeologii. In: *Muzealnictwo*, 25, 1982, p. 131.

⁵² BARTKO, O tzw. scjentyzmie ..., p. 132.

(structuralism) in a paradigmatic or syntigmatic relation as a structure (e.g. by structuring the museum function).⁵³

Bartko accuses Gluziński of this “multilingualism”, arguing that the simultaneous use of many methods relativises the cognitive value of the results achieved. The reviewer concludes her argument by stating that the proposal presented in the book *Upodstaw muzeologii* “characterizes the initial stage of the development of this knowledge”.⁵⁴

Bartko’s review of Gluziński’s book is important because it is the only one. Moreover, it was published in the pages of the leading Polish museum periodical (*Muzealnictwo*) and gave rise to a polemic with the author. Apart from her, only researchers assessing his achievements in connection with his doctoral dissertation have commented on Gluziński’s metatheoretical research. In the previously unpublished typescript of the “Opinion on the thesis of Wojciech Gluziński, MA, in connection with my application for granting him a doctoral scholarship”, addressed to the authorities of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, issued in Poznań on March 25, 1973, the most famous Polish museologist at the time, Prof. Kazimierz Malinowski states that Gluziński has been interested in the theory of museology since 1960.

His works – albeit few – have already met with great recognition abroad. Doctor Zbyněk Stránský, chief theoretician of the Department of Museology in Brno and editor of the Museological Journal [Czech: Muzeologické sešity – M.L.] published for a short time, describing the state of research on the problem of the concept of museology, lists Gluziński as the most serious theorist in this regard.⁵⁵

Among the two reviewers of Gluziński’s doctoral dissertation were the historian Prof. Jerzy Topolski and the lawyer, philosopher and ethicist Dr Stanisław Sodenhoff.⁵⁶ Topolski states in the unpublished typescript of the “Opinion of Wojciech Gluziński’s doctoral dissertation entitled Philosophical and methodological foundations of museology, 614 p. of typescript”, published in Poznań on November 6, 1976, that Gluziński’s efforts to develop the concept of this new academic discipline are largely pioneering. “The author in his work solves this problem in an original way, and – in my opinion – is basically right”.⁵⁷ He further refers to the opinion of Leszek Nowak, who, in his book entitled *Zasady marksistowskiej filozofii nauki: Próba systematycznej rekonstrukcji* [Principles of Marxist philosophy of science: An attempt at a systematic reconstruction] of 1974, distinguishes between, inter alia, basic and practical sciences. The aim of the former is to explain why it is so, and so they require a researcher who is a theorist and implement the empirical criterion. In the case of the latter, the researcher, who

⁵³ BARTKO, O tzw. scjentyzmie ..., pp. 132–133.

⁵⁴ BARTKO, O tzw. scjentyzmie ..., p. 133.

⁵⁵ MALINOWSKI, Kazimierz. Opinia o pracy naukowej mgr. Wojciecha Gluzińskiego w związku z moim wnioskiem o udzielenie mu stypendium doktoranckiego. [Unpublished typescript, signed by the author and dated March 25, 1973, Poznań]. Archives of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, catalogue number act: IZIK-6/6, p. 1.

⁵⁶ The documentation of Gluziński’s doctoral dissertation is in the Archives of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (file reference number: IZIK-6/6). However, the preserved documentation is incomplete, as it lacks Sodenhoff’s opinion (as of March 23, 2021).

⁵⁷ TOPOLSKI, Jerzy. Opinia o pracy doktorskiej mgra Wojciecha Gluzińskiego pt. Filozoficzne i metodologiczne podstawy muzeologii, s. maszynopisu 614. [unpublished typescript, signed by the author and dated November 6, 1976, Poznań; on the left margin, p. 1 at the bottom, a handwritten note: Entered on November 10, 1976 with illegible initials]. Archives of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, catalogue number act: IZIK-6/6, p. 1.

is a practitioner, focuses on how to achieve certain values – so the criterion is effectiveness. According to Topolski, Gluziński's ambition is to make museology a basic science in the sense that Nowak gave it. “[So he – M.L.] develops his own concept of museology as a theoretical science focused on explanation”.⁵⁸ It is supposed to be one theory explaining both a museum collection and what is visualised. Topolski considers this proposal as:

A radical programme of transforming museology as a practical discipline (or quasi discipline) into a basic discipline with an explanatory theoretical basis. [And then he asks – M. L.:] Isn't it too radical a programme? In my opinion, the direction of reconstruction of museology should be twofold. It would be necessary, first, as proposed by the author, to turn museology into a basic science, but secondly, it would be worth working on the theoretical foundations of museology understood as a practical discipline.⁵⁹

Despite the four years that passed from the publication of the “Opinion” on his doctoral dissertation (1976) to its publication in book form (1980), Gluziński did not take into account Nowak's concept cited by the reviewer. It deserves to be emphasised, because it concerned two (Nowak and Topolski) leading representatives of the Poznań School of Methodology, founded on the Marxist paradigm of historical materialism. Gluziński's motives require a separate study in this regard. One clue may be his consistent avoidance of references to Marxism when trying to construct his own museological theory, which means acting against the practice of academic writing in Eastern bloc countries. It is also significant that in the list of literature for *U podstaw muzeologii* there is no publication by Marx or Engels and no title containing the word “Marxism”. This does not mean that Gluziński *en bloc* rejected the implications of Marxism for museology, especially since in his book he refers to, other than Nowak, recognised Marxist methodologists, including – apart from the aforementioned Topolski – Adam Schaff and Jerzy Kmita.

But leaving aside Gluziński's attitude to Marxism, it should be stated that the basic problem boils down to the inability to use the division of sciences according to Nowak in his concept of museology. Acting in line with Topolski's suggestion would mean getting closer to Stránský and Neustupný, who postulate general and specialised museology. Meanwhile, Gluziński is against any disintegration of discipline. It is therefore surprising that Topolski suggested to Gluziński the need for basic and practical museology, and at the same time saw the way he solved the research task, consisting in the rejection of “the multiplicity of museology”, as “basically correct”.⁶⁰

Conclusion

The subject of museology for Gluziński is the structure of behaviours characteristic only of a museum. To get to know it, one has to reject contemporary frames of reference that distort the essence of the museum. This step allows us to avoid teleological explanations formulated on the basis of functions secondarily imposed on the museum. What constitutes the essence of a (“pure”) museum is the coupling of collecting and visualising the collection. It serves as a

⁵⁸ TOPOLSKI, *Opinia ...*, p. 2.

⁵⁹ TOPOLSKI, *Opinia ...*, p. 3.

⁶⁰ TOPOLSKI, *Opinia ...*, p. 1.

foundation for the museum's autonomy and contributes to the establishment of museology as an independent academic discipline.

Gluziński's theoretical research was in line with the research conducted before 1989 by museologists, mainly from the Eastern bloc countries. His concepts were to be an alternative to the instrumental and scientific understanding of the museum, which, in his opinion, was represented by museologists from Czechoslovakia and the GDR. Contrary to the opinion of Malinowski, quoted in the motto, his oeuvre was forgotten before it could be recognised.

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