Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska (Warsaw):
Modi memorandi. Working on a Polish lexicon in Germany

Scholars working in the field of memory studies often use different terms and notions, which hinders a successful communication while undertaking common projects. Hence, the lexicon “Modi memorandi”, published in 2014, aims at providing a coherent description of the most important terms. The book contains 180 entries, written by 101 authors – both Polish and foreign experts. The texts cover classical terms like “collective memory” or “realm of memory” as well as other notions referring to the field. The lexicon explains their roots and histories, discuss their contexts and the potential they hold for researchers working on collective memory.

Although the book was published in Polish, the project was realized in Berlin. The Polish-German location had a large impact on the lexicon. By comparing classical German and Polish authors we were able to describe the differences between the notion of “memory” in both national discourses. Furthermore, we wouldn’t have developed the concept without our prior experiences with translations of texts written by Jan and Aleida Assmann or Astrid Erll from German into Polish.