

'AND I STILL SEE THEIR FACES...': WILHELM VON BLANDOWSKI'S PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE COLLECTION OF MUSEUM IN GLIWICE

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Wilhelm von Blandowski (1822-1878) was born in Gleiwitz, Prussia (now Gliwice, Upper Silesia, Poland). From 1862 through 1868, Wilhelm von Blandowski may have taken up to 10, 000 photographs. Though only a portion of his photographic accomplishment has been preserved, the existing photographs provide an insight into their content and character, as well as providing us with the better understanding of the work of their author. The main emphasis in the paper will be on Blandowski's photographs presently in the collections of Museum in Gliwice. It will focus on his portraits with reference to some of the formal experiments Blandowski carried out, such as photomontage and narrative photography. Attention will be also drawn to his creation of documentary-like and realistic photographs. Both the commercial nature of the photographic business run by Blandowski, as well as his personal interest in picturing the human condition, had a strong influence on his photography. He put the person at the center of his interest. This was reflected in Blandowski's attempts to capture the natural world of the Prussian borderlands in the 1860s. Blandowski depicted a place inhabited by Germans, Jews and Poles 'the promised land' of early industrialization. Witnesses of these days, the known and anonymous characters look at us from the hundreds of prints taken by Blandowski. Among them one can see wealthy industrialists, priests and doctors, workers and peasants, children and women, the rich and the poor, persons of different professions, nationalities and confessions. The article concludes with a discussion of the influences that Blandowski has had on his contemporaries and also of his place in the history of early photography in Poland.

Key words: Blandowski, Prussia, Poland, collodion process, albumen prints, history of photography.

PHOTOGRAPHS taken by Wilhelm von Blandowski after his return from Australia to Europe, and also his personal life during that period remain almost unknown to the public abroad.¹ This situation has persisted for a number of reasons. Interestingly enough, Blandowski (1822-1878) is somewhat better known in Australia for his natural history work, while in Europe his Australian experiences remain in the deep shadow of ignorance.²

The main emphasis of this article will be the collection of Blandowski's photographs in Museum in Gliwice (previously Gleiwitz). Two volumes of Blandowski's photographs form the most significant part of the museum's 19th century photographic collection. The article will deal with the description and analysis of the collection with reference to some formal experiments Blandowski undertook in the course of his years in Gleiwitz, such as double exposure and narrative photography. Attention will be also drawn to his inclination to create documentary-like, realistic, commercial, and – in selected cases – genre photographs.

The collection of Blandowski's photographs consists mainly of formal portraits of his contemporaries

taken in his studio. Blandowski's prints form a fascinating panorama of different social types, professions, family scenes and so on. Unfortunately, we do not have any picture of Blandowski himself from the period in question. However, one might ask whether the man pictured sitting next to the carpenter from Gleiwitz, Mr Niegel, might not be Wilhelm von Blandowski (Figs 1 & 2).³ Still, Blandowski is with us through his photographs, and it is through these that we observe the world and emotions he captured in the 1860s.

However, it is the intimate family and individual portraits taken in his photographic atelier which dominated his professional activity in Gleiwitz and for that reason, the personal relationships he created are symbolically reflected in the title of this article.⁴

Overview of the literature relating to Blandowski in Poland

The work of Wilhelm von Blandowski after his return to Gleiwitz, Prussia (now Gliwice, Upper Silesia,



Fig. 1. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Photograph of Mr Niegel from Gleiwitz Photo MGI/F/3167; volume no. 19 (originally no. 11) from 1867-1868, © Museum in Gliwice.



Fig. 2. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Detail of photo MGI/F/3167, © Museum in Gliwice.

Poland), as well as his biography, still contain many unanswered questions. Since Lech Paszkowski's article was first published, some new facts concerning the life of Blandowski have been established (Paszkowski 1967; see also Darragh, this volume; Landsberg & Landsberg, this volume). Most articles in Polish literature on Blandowski were published in the last decade of the 20th century. The first author to discuss Blandowski's life as a photographer in Gleiwitz was Jerzy Lewczyński (1994).⁵ This was followed by an article by Adam Pol writing jointly with Lewczyński (Lewczyński & Pol 1993). Though the studies attracted the public's attention to Blandowski, who was completely unknown to both the public and to historians dealing with Polish photography, both articles left many unsolved issues concerning Blandowski's work and life in Upper Silesia, and also his life in Europe prior to his emigration to Australia. The contemporary press coverage, represented by the weekly, and then daily, local newspaper *Der Oberschlesische Wanderer*, has not been thoroughly examined and it is possible that this source will provide us with information that is lacking today.

The last decade then marks a growing interest in Blandowski's legacy shown in the number of recent references to his life and work between the years 1862 until his death in 1868. Most recently, Blandowski's photographs were used to open the selection of historical photographs from the Upper Silesia, which were published by Museum in Gliwice and the Silesian Museum in Goerlitz (Reclaw 2007; Reclaw & Pietsch 2007). The catalogue that accompanied the exhibition was entitled '*The Upper Silesia in the old photography /Oberschlesien im Objektiv*'.⁶ For the first time, this project offered an illustrated history of the region during the years of its rapid modernization during the 19th and 20th centuries (up to 1939) and turned out also to document a part of the history of Silesian photography. The decision to open the exhibition with Blandowski as the first photographer shown was justified as the role played by Blandowski at the beginning of modern photography has become more apparent, not only in Australia but also in Central Europe.

The articles by Lewczyński, as well as the informative one by Pol and Lewczyński, were followed by studies undertaken by Museum in Gliwice from 2003 onwards. These studies were partly the result of the decision to carry out conservation work on Blandowski's photos which began in 2006. The conservation process, as well as the contemporary studies of Blandowski's photographs, conducted at the

Museum revealed a number of significant findings concerning Blandowski's life and career after his return from Australia to Prussia and Gleiwitz (Paszowski 1967:163 & 168).⁷ A number of conclusions included in this paper appear for the first time.

Blandowski's years in Gleiwitz, 1859-1873

After his return from Australia, Wilhelm von Blandowski settled down in his native Prussian Upper Silesia, namely in Gleiwitz. The decision was understandable when one realizes that almost all of his large family (originally 13 brothers and sisters⁸) were already living in Upper Silesia and, most of all, his mother Leopoldine⁹ as well one of his sisters, Clementine, were living there¹⁰ (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:57) (Fig. 3). As Paszkowski notes, Blandowski left Australia on board the *SS Mathilde* on March 1859 and landed in Europe, at Plymouth (England) on 4 October 1859 (Paszowski 1967:163). It is, however, not exactly known when he returned to his native home in Gleiwitz. One can assume that this happened in late October 1859. Upon his arrival Blandowski purchased the house at Bankstrasse 115 A¹¹ and from that time on we can follow his life in Gleiwitz.

One might get the impression that after his return to Prussia, Blandowski was hoping to establish an academic career. From 1860 till 1862, he travelled around Germany taking an active role in academic meetings and delivering lectures on Australian flora, fauna and Aboriginal life. Lectures were organized in Dresden, Leipzig, Breslau (Wrocław) and in Berlin. Unfortunately, his publications from the time went almost unnoticed.¹² The situation in Gleiwitz was no better. The reception of his scientific achievements in Australia was weak and dissatisfying to Blandowski. Additionally, the local community did not express much interest towards activities that would support any development of culture and science.¹³ Also actions aimed at promoting geographical explorations, so typical of German social life of the time,¹⁴ did not provoke much public interest in the predominantly industrial city of Gleiwitz (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:59).

Under such circumstances, Blandowski probably decided to secure a more solid source of income. He began to make use of the photographic skills he had acquired in Australia to set up a photographic business in Gleiwitz. The decision to open the photo atelier in November 1862 was a risky one as there



Fig. 3. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Photo of Blandowski's sister Clementine von Blandowsky taken during her stay at Closter Tschirnau (Stift Tschirnau), presently Czerna, Lower Silesia, Poland. MGI/F/2872 volume no. 19 (originally no. 11) (1867-1868), © Museum in Gliwice.

already were a few photographers active in Gleiwitz and additional ones were in the offing (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:61). However, the high level of competitiveness in this service sector was not unusual, either in Gleiwitz, or in Prussia. In fact, the surplus of supply over demand for photographers was quite typical in many industrializing countries on different continents (Dobson 2004:15).¹⁵

Blandowski's personal life in Gleiwitz as well as his photographic business had its *ups and downs*. This was partly because of the fierce competition among the local photographers and partly because of Blandowski's sudden and unstable temper. In 1864, Blandowski faced severe financial problems and lowered the prices of his services (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:64).¹⁶ When, in January 1865, his financial standing worsened, he offered his house for sale (*Der Oberschlesische Wanderer*, 17

January 1865).¹⁷ The situation was initially very serious and in November 1865 his registration as a commercial entity was suspended by the Provincial court in Gleiwitz (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:64). Luckily for Blandowski, his circumstances improved at the beginning of 1866 and his atelier was back in business. On 25 June 1866, in spite of his financial problems Blandowski was elected to the Municipal Council of Gleiwitz (Nitsche 1886:355). Blandowski took an active role in the social life of the community (especially, after the closing his atelier in 1868), but his initiatives were reported as '*putting the local community and authorities in growing embarrassment*'¹⁸ (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:65). Finally, in September 1873, W. v. Blandowski was taken to the hospital for the mentally ill in Bunzlau,¹⁹ where five years later, on 18 December 1878 he died of a twisting of the bowel (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:65).

BLANDOWSKI AS A PHOTOGRAPHER

Blandowski may have become a photographer through self-study, which was not exceptional in those days (Lewczyński & Pol 1993: 65). There is no evidence that he had learnt this skill prior to his departure for Australia (Darragh, this volume) and it was probably in Australia that he first learnt photography, and it was definitely there that Blandowski discovered its practical benefits.²⁰ The enclosures to his pamphlet '*The Opinion of Men of Science in London of Wilhelm Blandowski's Ten Years Labor in Australia*' (Blandowski 1860)²¹ contained, among other things, the '*photographs*' from Australia (Paszkowski 1967:167).²² Blandowski also experimented in taking photographs for his book '*Australien in 142 photographischen Abbildungen nach zehnjährigen Erfahrungen zusammengestellt von W. v. Blandowski*' published in 1862.²³ Most of the illustrations in this book consist of photographic reproductions of drawings made by a young German graphic artist, Gustav Mützel.

As already mentioned, it is difficult to establish the reasons why Blandowski, after his arrival to Gleiwitz, decided to become a professional photographer. There are a number of possibilities. First of all, as noted above, he might have been disillusioned about the scale of activity of the cultural and intellectual life in Gleiwitz.²⁴ Its mediocrity might have made him realize that without the legal recognition of *academia*, his position as an explorer would neither provide him with any source of income, nor would it

allow him to occupy the social position he might have expected. These pessimistic feelings were additionally fueled by his failure in promoting the activities of the *Berlin Geographical Society*,²⁵ as well as by the limited interest his Australian endeavors gained in Gleiwitz (Lewczyński 1994), Prussia and other German states. Blandowski, in late 1862, must have understood that living in this remote and provincial city demanded that he build his future upon an occupation that would be a practical, and reliable, source of income.²⁶

Nevertheless, despite this pragmatic approach, Blandowski also wanted to find a profession that would possess an artistic dimension. He strongly emphasized this feature of his activity in the advertisements he placed in the local press. Photography at that time was a '*Sunrise*' industry, and this seemed to fit very well with Blandowski's broader perspective of a business that combined practical and aesthetic elements.

The growing number of photographers in Gleiwitz did not stop him from setting up a new artistic enterprise. Analyzing his press advertisements from the 1860s, one could believe that Blandowski was convinced that the quality of his work would prevail over the photographic services of the other competitors (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:60). Reading some of his press advertisements one could trace his ambition to '*take the pictures with the sense of artistic appearance*' (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:64), in rich and interesting settings which would indicate both the nature and the profession of the person whose image he was supposed to immortalize on the glass plate.

Blandowski started his photographic business in late 1862 when his firm was listed in the official record of the commercial enterprises (registered by the Royal Prussian Provincial Court) in November 1862 and received register no. 199 (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:61).

His photographic studio was located on the ground floor of the building he was the owner of at Bankstrasse 115 A (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:61).²⁷ The name of this commercial enterprise '*Photographische Anstalt und Kunsthandlung*' (Photographic Studio and Art Shop), tells us a lot about the intentions and ambitions of its founder. The photo atelier was located on the ground floor of this massive, two-storied house and was composed of four rooms: corridor-cloakroom, photographic studio, workshop and dark room (*Der Oberschlesische Wanderer*, 3, 17 January 1865).²⁸ An idea of how his studio looked,



Fig. 4. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Photographic atelier (Photographic studio). Inventory picture. One of the three existing. MGI/F/2704, volume no. 19 (originally no. 11) (1867-1868), © Museum in Gliwice.

and the kind of equipment and settings he used can be reconstructed from three photos included in album no. 11 (presently No.19) (Fig. 4).²⁹

From the advertisements published in *'Der Oberschlesische Wanderer'*, it can be seen that Blandowski offered a variety of photographic services. The contemporary price list comprises 12 photos for 'carte de visité', group and family photos, bust pictures, as well as open air, stereoscope photography and reproduction of technical drawings, construction and mining plans. Blandowski obligated himself to preserve the negative of each picture for at least one year and gave a warranty for the sharpness and contrast of the photograph³⁰ (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:63). His studio was originally opened from 10 am till 3 pm. After 1864 he changed the hours and the atelier was offering its services from 10 am through 2 pm in the winter season and from 8 am till 6 pm in the summer time (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:62, 64). Local residents formed the basis of his clientele. However, one can see from the description of the photos that the persons Blandowski photographed in his studio came

from all over Germany and from other countries as well. We can observe persons coming not only from the industrial (Prussian) part of Upper Silesia, but also from the other parts of Prussia (Berlin, Breslau, Oppeln), and other German states (such as Hamburg). Other customers arrived from abroad, including Russia, the Polish districts in Russia and even from exotic Brazil.

Luckily for us, Blandowski was also taking pictures which, either ordered or not, were shot in the open air and this allows us to become familiar with Gliwicz and Upper Silesia in the 1860s (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:64). Other photographs capture his interests in experiment and the spirit of a retired explorer who observed and described the world in order to present the different human types around him, as well as to give a commentary on the rules governing social life. As he also demonstrated during his time in Australia, Blandowski was open to the social context and was interested in tracing signs of social injustices or in simply depicting his great fascination with life (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Peasants in the market (or on the market day), MGI/F/2560, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

Blandowski's photographs in the collection of Museum of Gliwice

From 1862 through 1868, Wilhelm von Blandowski might have taken up to 10,000 photographs³¹ (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:55-65, 67) (Fig. 6). In the years of 1862-64 alone, Blandowski produced 2,000 glass plates. Only a portion of his photographic accomplishments have been preserved. In spite of this limitation, the existing photographs seem to be representative for the period in discussion and provide us with the better understanding of the work of their author (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:63). At present, Blandowski's position in 19th century history is largely defined by his participation in the exploration of Australia. His work in Prussia and especially in Gleiwitz somehow plays a secondary role. On the other hand, Blandowski's reputation as an eminent photographer of the second half of the 19th century



Fig. 6. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Portrait of Miss Hedwig Nolda. MGI_F_1908-2692_Strona_543. © Museum in Gliwice.

has began to be recognized in Poland and Germany and his photographs are becoming a part of the legacy of the history of Central European photography.

Blandowski's photographs found their way to the local museum at the beginning of the 20th century. Five albums of albumen and – occasionally – collodion prints³² (Fig. 7) done by Blandowski were purchased from a local pensioner, Stanjka, known only by his last name. The photographs, taken in the years of 1862-1868, were officially put into the museum's register on 10 April 1906 and on 24 May 1906. It is believed that the all five volumes contained approximately 5,000 pictures (Anon. n.d.).³³

The guide to museum collections from 1907, written by Artur Schiller, the first director and co-founder of the institution, mentioned the collection



Fig. 7. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Mr L. Fraenkel, collodion print. MG/F/2328, volume no. 19 (originally no. 11) (1867-1868), © Museum in Gliwice.

of the photographs, but instead of five volumes, the description of the collections referred to six albums (Schiller 1907). The explanation of this inconsistency might have been quite simple. Whatever the case may be, the museum's official register is little more than a guide-book to the collection.³⁴ What is really interesting is the fact that the guide book referred to the author of the photographs as a '*certain known professional photographer of Gleiwitz active in the 60s*'. It did not mention Blandowski's name.

The reference to Blandowski's photographs does not appear in the catalogue of 1915 (Schiller 1915:10-11) and consequently was not in the official guide to the museum's collection in 1930.³⁵ The name of Blandowski 'disappeared' from the common consciousness and this situation lasted up to the late 20th century. Studies of Blandowski's activities in Aus-

tralia have inspired historians and photographers in Upper Silesia to finally begin studies of Blandowski's work in Poland. Even, his connection to Gliwice/Gleiwitz and his remote relations to the Polish nobility had to be re-discovered as this quite useful fact was totally forgotten.³⁶

As noted above, Museum in Gliwice, which apart from Blandowski's photographs, has a significant collection of old 19th and early 20th century photography, is in possession of two surviving Blandowski albums. The first one originally bearing the label no. 3 presently includes 785 photographs.³⁷ The other one, originally no. 11 contains the photographs assembled and probably taken in the years of 1867-1868 and comprises presently 530 prints.³⁸ At the moment the whole collection numbers 1315 photographic prints. Two world wars, and the historical turmoil which Upper Silesia experienced in 20th century makes it virtually impossible to define when and how the other three albums were lost, damaged or simply stolen. Some of the rare inscriptions inside the volumes suggest that certain photos might have been cut from the albums in the period between the world wars.³⁹

The condition of the photographs had already deteriorated in the 1920s and '30s⁴⁰ and reached their lowest point in 2000, when a number were water damaged through flooding.⁴¹ A comprehensive restoration process was started in July 2006. It was preceded by the digitalization of the whole collection in 2005. The restoration of the first volume (number 3) of Blandowski's photographs was concluded in April 2007. The overall process of conservation of the pictures as well as the restoration of the original composition of the album (which was re-assembled as originally designed) was finished in 2008.⁴²

Blandowski's photo collection - description

Both the commercial nature of the photographic business run by Blandowski as well as his personal interest in capturing the condition of the human beings had a strong influence on the way people and objects were presented in his photography. It led Blandowski to use different types of photography. Blandowski's photos used such types of representation as single or double portraits (which dominate in the whole collection), family portraits, narrative photos, open-air photography including town and industrial landscape, genre photography and advertisement. In one case the volume, originally no. 3 (presently

No.18) contains the reproduction of a painting and is not the photographic portrait of a woman⁴³ (Fig. 8).

Portraits can be divided into a number of categories: Blandowski's family portraits, representatives of different professions (Fig. 9) and social types (such as Cossacks). His narrative photography addressed both social and national issues (such as the photography of peasants in the market of Gleiwitz, Fig. 5)⁴⁴ and was based, either on a series of photos which illustrated a story he decided to tell us for some reason⁴⁵ (Fig. 10), or, just on a single photo, which thanks to the formal experiments introduced by Blandowski gained an unexpected and symbolic meaning, as in case of photo 'Prosit Neujahr!'⁴⁶ (Fig. 11).

Blandowski's attitude towards the photographed person placed the human being at the center of his interest. One could already see that relation earlier in



Fig. 8. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Photograph of painted portrait 'Goldine Eiger'. The only such example among the photo prints in Blandowski's collection in Museum in Gliwice. MGI/F/2116, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864. © Museum in Gliwice.

Australia, when Blandowski took photographs of Nyeri Nyeri Aboriginal persons. This photograph was reproduced in the *Australien* volume (illustration 26) with the caption 'after a photograph by W.v.Blandowski' (Blandowski 1862). Back at home this approach continued to influence Blandowski's way of capturing the nature of the world of the Prussian borderlands in the 1860s. Blandowski used his cameras to depict a place inhabited by Germans, Jews, Poles and Russians at that time. He left us with the view of 'the promised land'⁴⁷ of early industrialization, in an area where the social strata of the city and the province had been changing rapidly.

The witnesses of these days, the known and anonymous characters look at us from the hundreds of prints made by Blandowski. Among them one can see wealthy industrialists, priests and doctors, workers and peasants, children (Figs 12 & 13) and women, the rich and the poor, persons of different profes-



Fig. 9. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Little milkman, MGI/F/2075, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.



Fig. 10. Wilhelm von Blandowski. 'After work', the last photo from three photos series. MGI/F/1951, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

sions, nationalities and confessions. We can see the coal-miners, carpenters, shoemakers (Fig. 14), doctors, butchers, milkmen, catholic and protestant priests as well as rabbis, soldiers and old serious ladies as well as pensioners and, rather rarely, the owners of big fortunes. A comparatively large group of Blandowski's customers were the local Jews.⁴⁸ For this reason, these photographs give us a unique opportunity to learn about the members of this community as well as others (Muzeum in Gliwice 2006).

Apart from the photographs taken in the atelier, which tend to follow the formal requirements of the epoch with an intimate relation with the photographer, the collection contain the examples of genre photography, describing the fascinating world *outside Blandowski's studio*. This appears to have been equally intriguing and attractive to Blandowski as it is today for the contemporary public. The industrial landscapes, city scenes (Fig. 15), as well as the proto-



Fig. 11. Wilhelm von Blandowski. 'Prosit Neujahr!'. Photo of Mr Weimann from Gleiwitz. Example of double exposure. MGI/F/3168 2872, volume no. 19 (originally no. 11) (1867-1868), © Museum in Gliwice.

advertisement photographs which presented the different breeds of cattle enrich the overall photographic output of Blandowski for the years of 1862-1868. The large number of pictures of cattle of the Holstein breed, which were possibly commissioned by one of his relatives,⁴⁹ reminds us of Blandowski's photographs and drawings of the animals he originally made in Australia (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:58).

Blandowski's photographs contain both the traditional (in the sphere of symbols used) as well as new elements. One can easily trace his older interests in ethnology and the naturalist approach which indirectly recalled his overseas experience. Blandowski's readiness to go into the open-air should not surprise us though it was not as common in those days. In some other cases, he anticipated some of the formal



Fig. 12. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Portrait of child, Richard Hulka, from Gleiwitz, MGI/F/2216, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

methods that were more in the direction of the avant-garde in the visual arts rather than the artisan tradition of photographic ateliers of the 1860s.

In the sphere of iconography Blandowski's portraits, typically for the epoch, made reference to representative paintings elaborated by the academies of fine arts. For that purpose, he used the elements of iconographic language and symbols which were used by the academics. The way Blandowski used scenography for each picture showed his erudition and acquaintance with conventional symbols. This reflected Blandowski's experience as a student who had attended the mining university in Berlin (Darragh, this



Fig. 13. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Picture of Isidor Hamburger from Gleiwitz, MGI/F/2656, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

volume). Possibly because of his university background and the experiences he took from Australia (and for the other reasons discussed in the paper), he was open and innovative enough to compose his photographs by referring to common objects (mostly connected with the profession of the respective persons). His portraits are filled with the books denoting literate and wealthy people, priests and intellectuals, or skulls (typically to illustrate students of medicine and doctors, etc.).

He even composed the scenes in a way that denied the concept of the proper 'decor' (to use the term from the theory of the 19th century academic painting) and instead they tend to be natural or even amusing (such as the photograph of the medicine doctor G. Konntny from Peiskretscham and his little patient, Fig. 16).⁵⁰ In

some cases, Blandowski was witty, innovative and treated the photography in a very progressive way constructing its narrative aspect. In the picture of Herr Weimann (also known as 'Prosit Neujahr'),⁵¹ Blandowski used the technique of double exposure to create a new reality, multiply the meanings and to go beyond the traditional portrait.

Blandowski's portraits of children proved his interest in looking for a relationship with the model. Looking into their eyes (and not only those of the children), one can see Blandowski's attempt to tell the story of their lives or to look into their future. Some of the clients of his studio are not looking into camera, but away from it, somewhere to left or right. Their vision is concentrated on the artifacts of the profession they pursue or the toys they have (in the case of children) (Fig. 17). A separate group of portraits form the pictures of his relatives: Arminia, Clementine and Henryk von Blandowsky. A photograph of the grave of his mother, Leopoldine T. von Woyrsch⁵² occupies

a very special place in this group (Figs 18 & 19). Once again, by taking this picture, Blandowski shows his sensitiveness to family values and his exceptionally strong attachment to his mother, who spent her last years with him in Gleiwitz.

CLOSING REMARKS

It is difficult to define the influence that Blandowski has had on his contemporaries. Daguerreotype photography was introduced in Gleiwitz in 1846, and from that time on developed rapidly (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:60). Blandowski definitely was not the first person to run a photo atelier in Gleiwitz during the 1860s. One of his greatest business competitors was Wilhelm Beermann (1810-1881) whose photographs are in some cases equally interesting to those of Blandowski.



Fig. 14. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Shoemaker, MGI/F/2316, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.



Fig. 15. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Danziger Shop with the Men's Clothes in the Main Square. MGI/F/2083, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.



Fig. 16. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Portrait of MD (medical doctor) G. Konntny. MGI/F/2145, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

Neglected and forgotten until recently, Blandowski's photography is now attracting greater public interest. The photographs of Blandowski's have influenced one of the most acclaimed Polish photographers, Jerzy Lewczyński.⁵³ As a part of his '*archeology of photography*' that Lewczyński introduced in the late '60s he re-used one of Blandowski's narrative cycle photographs ('*Come to work, Came back from work, After the work*') in 1993, to construct his own version of the triptych (Lewczyński 2005:151).⁵⁴

Blandowski's photographs are now requested for exhibition by a growing number of museums in Poland. As noted previously, they were the opening item in the catalogue and the exhibition, entitled '*The Upper Silesia in the old photography /Oberschlesien im Objektiv*', a joint project of Museum in Gliwice, Poland and Silesian Museum in Görlitz, Germany.⁵⁵



Fig. 17. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Portrait of a child. MGI_F_1908-2692_Strona_641. © Museum in Gliwice.

Realizing the legacy of Wilhelm von Blandowski, the decision to choose him as the opening photographer of the project was obvious. It was the recognition of the role he played in the course of modern photography, not only in Australia,⁵⁶ but also of his growing prominence in Central Europe. However, thorough research on his work in Gleiwitz, as seen from the European perspective, is still ahead of us.

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Fig. 18. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Photograph of von Blandowski's mother grave (now destroyed). MG/F/2555, volume no 18 (originally no 3); 1864, © Museum in Gliwice.

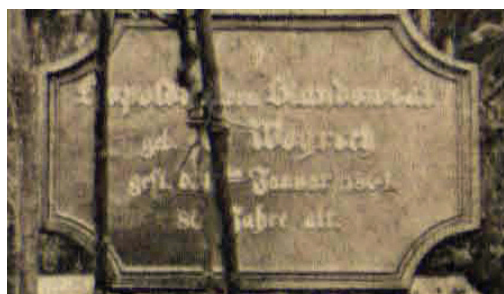


Fig. 19. Wilhelm von Blandowski. Detail of the photo (mother's grave), © Museum in Gliwice.

contour of the eyes, or even the way the palms of hand form fists resemble those from the confirmed portraits of Blandowski from Australia and Germany.

4. The quotation refers to the title of an exhibition devoted to the history of Polish Jews that was originally presented to the public at the Museum in Gliwice in 1996 (Museum in Gliwice 2006). The exhibition was originally prepared by the Foundation Shalom (and put on show in 1996, in Zacheta Gallery in Warsaw).
5. For technical reasons, this article appeared a year later than the one written by Lewczyński and Pol (1993).
6. The exhibition was shown from 19 May 2007 until 17 July 2007. Afterwards, it was shown in Görlitz, Germany from 4 August, through 30 September 2007. In 2008, the photographs were presented from 8 February onwards in Potsdam, Germany, and hosted by Haus der Brandenburgisch-Preußischen Geschichte, Potsdam.
7. According to the letter of von Blandowski to Sir Henry Barkly, Blandowski landed in Plymouth on 4 October 1859; the letter dated on 5 October 1860 in Gleiwitz gives us the archival confirmation that at that time Blandowski was already living in Gleiwitz, but up to now a more precise date of his return is unknown. The dates of publishing his two articles in the Yearly Report of the Silesian Society for National Culture in Breslau in 1860 are not indicative as the report was either published in late 1860 or at the beginning of 1861. The published articles do not indicate the date of his arrival to Gleiwitz; however, one can assume that it happened in late October or November 1859.
8. One of his sisters, Emily, already died in 1850; (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:58)
9. She died on 8 January 1864; see: picture of her grave in Album no. III (18); picture MGL/F/2555; also Lewczyński & Pol (1993:63).
10. After 1837, Blandowski's mother moved back to Gleiwitz and was living at that time at Wysoka Street. When Blandowski bought the house at Bankstrasse 115A, she lived with him, occupying the first floor of the building, until she died in 1864 (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:57).
11. Presently Bankowa str. 4; Lewczyński (1994:184) wrongly attributes it to Bankowa no. 7,

NOTES

1. This situation is the result of a number of factors; one of them was the fact that the collection of Blandowski's photographs was remote and inaccessible to Australian and, in principle, to foreign researchers.
2. Parts of this article were originally presented at a symposium on 'Blandowski's Expedition to the Murray River: European Naturalists and their Contribution to Science in Australia between 1850 and 1860', organized by the Royal Society of Victoria and held in Mildura, Australia in September, 2007. Blandowski's positive and very open approach towards indigenous Australians is almost unknown in Europe, whereas his violent temper is commonly recognized.
3. The question put forward here will be left without further discussion. Some elements seen in this photo such as the open book with the photographs or illustrations might be indicative. Also selected features of the face of the men illustrated in the book, such as the shape of the ears, the line of nose and eye-brows, the

12. See: The works by W. von Blandowski in Paszkowski (1967:170) and Darragh (this volume).
13. The municipal museum was not set up until 1905. The situation in Gleiwitz was in contrast to Melbourne, where Blandowski was active in the setting up of a number of learned societies (Pescott 1961: 6-9).
14. In June 1860 Blandowski organized action to promote the idea of Carl Ritter's Berlin Geographical Society calling for the meeting to set up the local branch of the society. He did not get much interest for this initiative. The local division of Ritter's organization was never established in Gleiwitz.
15. See the example of *Yokohama shashin* and the fierce competition among the photographers in Japan (Dobson 2004:15). The situation in Europe was similar.
16. The photographs for *carte de visite* were cut by half to 2 Rth.; (Lewczyński & Pol 1993:64).
17. The financial situation must have been serious since Blandowski was expecting the payment to be made in cash. The sale however might also have been related to the fact that one year earlier his mother died and Blandowski was constantly struggling to rent the apartments and commercial space in his house.
18. Unfortunately, the nature of his policy proposals on 'communal issues' are not known, but from 1871 they led to the deterioration of his social position. For more see Lewczyński and Pol (1993:65). Due to the fact that the local archive was temporarily closed in 2007, and from 2008 onwards, it was impossible to establish more facts in this respect.
19. Presently Polish Bolesławiec.
20. Both of these ideas received confirmation in the course of the conference in Mildura, 2007. John Kean in his lecture 'Observing Mondellimin' pointed out that, for the expedition to the Murray River in 1856-57, Blandowski took with him 'photographic apparatus', weighing over than 100 kg as Krefft (n.d.) noted, in order to take pictures of the countryside, its flora and fauna and the Nyeri Nyeri Aboriginal people. It is worth mentioning that the pictures he originally took (though not preserved) were collodion prints. It is recorded that Blandowski was accompanied by a Mr Brown on one of his early expeditions. This might be Lyne Brown, who made the collodion process a specialty in the 1854-1855 period (Davies & Stanbury 1986:139). Blandowski's photographic career in Australia is discussed in Newton (1988). The collodion technique was used by Blandowski in selected cases in Gleiwitz upon his arrival to Europe (See also note 32). Juliusz Garztecki (1979) mentions the training of several major photographers in various Polish studios, once the trade was learned the photographer frequently started his/her own studio.
21. William von Blandowski 1860 [4 pages of English and 6 pages of German], the respective enclosures were added to the German part of his work
22. One of the photographs is reproduced by J. Lewczyński (1994:164).
23. W. v. Blandowski published his book in Gleiwitz 1862 and many agree it was one of the main reasons Blandowski got into financial troubles. The book included drawings by G. Mützel, photographed by Blandowski. In some Polish studies on Blandowski this issue is somehow mystified and different ideas concerning the reproduction techniques used have appeared. J. Lewczyński (1994:167) wonders whether Blandowski was accompanied by the draughtsman.
24. One can get the impression that his perception was close to the negative opinion J.W. Goethe expressed in 1790 while visiting Upper Silesia, namely Friedrichshüte in Tarnowitz [Polish: Tarnowskie Góry; nearby from Gleiwitz] to see the first ever steam pump machine on the Continent. His admiration for the machine stayed, in deep contrast to his negative opinion of the uncivilized people living there at that time. See: Conrads (2002: 423) [in German]. Goethe's entry into a local register book is reproduced in: Drabina (2002: 100 [in Polish]).
25. Founded in 1828 by Carl Ritter (German: *Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*)
26. His book *Australien in 142 Photographischen Abbildungen* (1862) almost bankrupted Blandowski for he had to cover all costs connected with the project including the cost of illustrations provided for him by Gustav Mützel.
27. Both authors rightly identified the house as the one that presently, partly rebuilt, still exists at Bankowa Street no. 4 in Gliwice. The identification is confirmed in Englender (2007). Lewczyński (1994:184) wrongly identified the place as Bankowa Street no. 7.
28. *Der Oberschlesische Wanderer*, 17 January 1865, p. 1 contains the sale advertisement published by Blandowski in the course of his financial problems of 1865-1866, his mansion house at Bankstrasse, Blandowski described as; '*mein massives, zweistöckiges Haus*'. The rest of the advertisement contains the precise description of the whole house including information that it was composed of 18 rooms and 5 kitchens.
29. Album no. 11 (presently no. 19); these are the following pictures MGL/F/2704; MGL/F/2705 and MGL/F/2717; the latter one was originally partly burnt and slightly damaged.
30. 12 pictures for 'carte de visite' cost 4 German tallars (Rth), family picture from 5 to 10 Rth and busts 3-4 Rth. A 5 pound loaf of bread cost 3, 5 Sgr. Rth was divided into 24 Silver grosch (Sgr); 1 Sgr was divided into 12 pfennigs- [author's comment].
31. Wilhelm von Blandowski, but also one other spelling can be (though rarely) traced, namely W. v. Blandowsky; see: *Album nr. 3. Photographische Aufnahmen von 1864. Wilhelm v. Blandowski*. Muzeum w Gliwicach, sygn. MGL/F/1908-2692, chart 11. The photo of *Miss Hedwig Nolda* (Fig. 6) is put in a window-like frame on the bottom of which appears the official name of the atelier of '*W.v. Blandowsky in Gleiwitz*'. The other members of the family exclusively used the spelling 'Blandowsky'
32. The analysis provided by Mr Krzysztof Dudek from the Museum of History of Photography, Kraków who has supervised the conservation and reconstruction of

- Blandowski's photographs since 2006. The collodion prints bear the following signatures: MGL/F/1998 with Otto and Laura from Laurahütte (presently Siemianowice) and MGL/F/2328 representing Mr L. Fraenkel from Gleiwitz (Fig. 7). Blandowski used the collodion process of developing pictures on his trip the Murray River.
33. Anon. n.d. *Oberschlesisches Museum Haupt-Verzeichnis*, no. sign. [translated into Polish, version unpublished, Annex 1; Volume 1]. Photos OMV/2055-2058 and OMV/2264. The size 5.3 x 8.6 cm is the most common one used. The biggest ones are of 22 x 16 cm. They are mostly rectangle but some are ellipse or round.
 34. Artur Schiller, *Führer durch das Oberschlesische Museum zu Gleiwitz*, Gleiwitz 1907. This information and the number of photographs are mentioned mistakenly by Lewczyński & Pol (1993:66); both authors probably did not have access to the main register of the museum or they decided to trust Schiller (the first director of Museum). It is possible that one can speak about a simple printing mistake in the guide book or actually there was an additional, 6th album which was only lent to the museum by the owner and then returned to him. Blandowski's legacy including documents, drawings, photographs and copper engravings had been donated by the family to Berlin Royal Library and then transferred in 1884 to the Zoological Museum in Berlin (Darragh, this volume). It could happen that also the other exhibits from Blandowski's collection, including the 6th volume of the pictures was sold to someone else or... may have never existed. The Museum's Register mentions 5 volumes (vol. 1 of the Register); no. 2055-58 and no. 2060.
 35. Interestingly enough the catalogue mentions the photographs of another famous photographer, contemporary to Blandowski, namely Beermann (Schiller 1915:11).
 36. This aspect of Blandowski's biography was in fact used to introduce him to Polish public opinion and not to present him as a German. See: J. Lewczyński, op. cit.
 37. 'Nr. 3. *Photographische Aufnahmen von 1864. Wilhelm v. Blandowski, Gleiwitz*', Museum in Gliwice, sygn. MGL/F/1908-2692
 38. 'Nr. 11. *Photographische Aufnahmen von 1867-1868 von Wilhelm v. Blandowski, Gleiwitz*'. Museum in Gliwice, sygn. MGL/F/2693-3222. Lewczyński and Pol (1993:66) provide numbers different from the catalogue cited above.
 39. In album no. 11 on one of the charts (originally numbered 317 by Blandowski) informs the reader of five missing photos. The character of the notice and name of the city Hindenburg O/S indicates that it was done after 1915 and most probably after 1922 when the new name of nearby Zabrze was decisively changed into Hindenburg.
 40. The first remarks on the pictures missing from the album appeared in 1870 (Album no. XI, presently no. 19), page 288 (original numbering), under the photograph which originally had number 4861 and presently has the signature of MGL/F/2746 and representing Mr ('Herr') Grüner; the other one appears on page no. 317 (original numbering; presently cart 30 when counted from the beginning of the album including the cover page) which might indicate that some pictures were taken / or discovered as missing by Theodor Franz from Hindenburg (Zabrze). Literally it says 'Theodor Franz, Hindenburg, O/S Schechepplatz 5'. The name of Zabrze was changed into Hindenburg in 1915, so the notice was made after this date; the abbreviation O/S was used commonly in 20 and most often in 30's of 20th century so that might be the actual date of making this comment. The interpretation of this remark might be really wide starting from the fact that the pictures for some reason were given to Th. Franz for publication or a similar reason, quite a common practice at that time, and concluding with the possibility that he was the one who had taken them himself and that they were not returned. The identity of Th. Franz will have to be established to come to any justified conclusions.
 41. In 2000, 76 photographs from Album no. 3 (presently no. 18) were partly or severely damaged. In the course of restorations that took place in 2007 the original condition of the pictures was regained.
 42. The first album to undergo complete restoration was the album with the original Roman number III (bearing no. 18 added later to the album) from 1864; this conservation is currently followed by the treatment of the album from the years 1867-1868 (originally no. XI; then no. 19). The whole conservation was due to be finished in 2008 but is ongoing.
 43. The picture bears inscription "*Goldene Eiger*", MGL/F/2116, originally the print had no. 553 as given by Blandowski
 44. MGL/F/2560
 45. Series called "After work" MGL/F/1949-51
 46. See the photo titled "Prosit Neujahr!" MGL/F/3168
 47. I do not refer to the Biblical description, but rather to the title of the book by Wł. Reymont, *Ziemia obiecana* [Promised Land] of 1899 where the author gave the splendid epic panorama of the 19th century industrialization (though occurring in Western borderlands of Russia in Łódź, in so-called Polish Manchester). This reference to late 19th century Upper Silesia is justified and shows the social and economic turmoil going on in the region at that time when one day meant bankruptcy and the other one financial success.
 48. It should not surprise us for in the year 1858 Jews counting 1.880 persons made up 18.8% of the city population. In 1867, 2009 Jews were living in Gleiwitz. The number of the Jewish citizens and the overall figure of the Jews living in the Upper Silesia resulted from the significant role this community was playing in the economic development of the region and the rights they equally shared with the other inhabitants. For more on Jews in Gleiwitz see Muzeum in Gliwice (2006).

49. That's the concept presented by Lewczyński and Pol (1993:58). The one to commission the pictures was supposedly Salomon (or Samuel Blandowski). At the present time, this thesis is not supported by much evidence and the issue stays open.
50. *Album no. 3* op. cit. photo MGL/F/ 2145
51. MGL/F/3168
52. Photographs MGL/F/1490, MGL/F/2872, MGL/F/4189 and MGL/F/2555 respectively.
53. Jerzy Lewczyński was so fascinated with v. Blandowski that he devoted some of his writings and essays to him. He can be considered as the one who re-discovered v. Blandowski in the late 80s of the 20th century.
54. More on J. Lewczyński and his photography see: Jerzy Lewczyński. 2005.
55. The exhibition was opened on 18 May 2006. Afterwards, it was presented in Görlitz, Germany, and in 2008 in Potsdam, Germany (see earlier remarks, note 6 above).
56. Unfortunately, only a single photograph, a self portrait of Blandowski, survives in the Australian collections, in this case held in the National Gallery of Victoria (see Darragh, this volume).

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