



autonomous and conscious decision. Like before, the reason behind it was, in most cases, love bond and will to accompany the Polish husband or wife. There were a plenty opportunities to meet, since the border gates cracked open after 1956 enabled more contacts, especially with citizens of other socialist countries.⁵³ While earlier Poland offered an illusion of freedom to the scarce leftist refugees from the West, with the 1956 breakthrough it became a real Promised Land, attracting Hungarians, Bulgarians, citizens of the GDR, Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union who lusted for a bit of freedom. While most of them arrived just to take a fresh breath, some stayed for a longer time – if not for good.

trans. Tristan Korecki

⁵³ See Włodzimierz Borodziej and Jerzy Kochanowski (eds.), *Bocznymi drogami. Nieoficjalne kontakty społeczeństw socjalistycznych 1956–1989* (Warsaw, 2010); *üdem*, and Joachim von Puttkamer (eds.), “Schleichwege”. *Inoffizielle Begegnungen sozialistischer Staatsbürger zwischen 1956 und 1989* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna, 2010); Dariusz Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia? Migracje z Polski 1949–1989* (Warsaw, 2010).