

The background of the entire page is a vibrant yellow-green color. Overlaid on this background is a white line pattern that resembles a topographic map, with various concentric and irregular loops and swirls of varying thicknesses.

2020

DZIKHI BIT

**HERITAGE
INTERPRETATION
CULTURE
HISTORY**

**TRAKT Cultural
Tourism Centre's Annual**

We write about everything
relating to the heritage
of our city, its interpretation,
culture which defines us and
history which constitutes our
identity. We do this from the
perspective of Porta Posnania
and the Royal-Imperial Route.

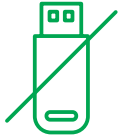
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We are reducing the amount of printed materials to the minimum.



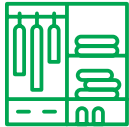
We use reusable materials during our workshops.



We do not commission unnecessary gadgets for conferences.



We use reusable materials for our temporary exhibitions.



We run Givebox located at the amphitheatre by the Cybina River.



We drink and serve tap water.



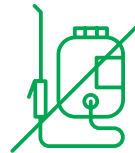
We serve either vegan or vegetarian food during our events.



We segregate waste.



We do not use plastic bags and we do not buy disposable dishware.



We are reducing both chemical spraying and using salt on pavements.



We use public transport and ride bikes.



We are replacing some of our chemical cleaning products with eco-friendly products.



We mow the lawns less often.

Monika Herkt
Director
of TRAKT CTC

#HeritageForTheClimate

This issue of *DziKHi BIT* as well as the programme of events planned for 2020 by TRAKT CTC had been prepared before the pandemic reached us. Although the situation has changed and the possibility to implement many of our plans is now limited, we decided not to change the subject of this publication because the themes we are discussing in it will still be important after the fight against the virus has ended. The pandemic made us realise the fact that we have to take even more responsibility for the world.

#HeritageForTheClimate is a motto which is going to accompany us – the employees of TRAKT Cultural Tourism Centre – throughout the whole 2020. The discussion about the choice of this theme lasted several months. Not because we were not convinced of the importance of the subject. It was rather a question of a dilemma over whether a cultural institution, whose statutory area of activity focuses on local cultural heritage, can, in fact, have a say in the discussion on the global climate change. The discussion which seems to be reserved for scientists, politicians, entrepreneurs or, when it comes to our industry, nature and natural history museums and science centres.

Relatively quickly, however, the initial hesitation turned into a strong conviction that not only we can or should engage in the process of supporting mitigating and adaptative action relating to the global warming, but it is, in fact, our duty. It is our ethical obligation resulting from the social responsibility of a cultural institution to take care of the heritage entrusted to it. We are also obliged to do it by the unique environment in which we work. Porta Posnania, which is our main exhibition and education space, is located by the Cybina River. Close proximity to the river, which is disappearing right in front of our eyes, as well as to the drying riverside meadows leaves no doubt that the centuries-old heritage of this place is ENDANGERED. How are we going to be able to

talk about the island on which Mieszko I established a fortified settlement, built a magnificent palace and founded the first cathedral in Poland if it disappears from our landscape? How are we going to explain such dramatic changes in our surrounding to the next generations?

In order to develop the idea of #HeritageForTheClimate effectively we joined the Climate Heritage Network (CHN) created at the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). We share the belief that art, culture and cultural heritage are a great asset and have the power to inspire and initiate action to combat climate change. They have the potential to contribute to creating sustainable development pathways. This potential, however, still remains untapped.

The plan of action, which has been adopted to implement #HeritageForTheClimate's postulates, is twofold. The gist of the plan is presented in our manifesto. First of all, we acknowledge that an effective way to shape pro-environmental behaviours is to set an example. Thus, we created TRAKT's 'green code', which we share with you on the next pages of this publication, along with the aforementioned manifesto. We consider these changes in our internal policy as a permanent process of self-improvement. Secondly, drawing on our knowledge, passion, space and resources, we have planned a year-long programme of educational and tourist events and exhibitions.

The majority of our #HeritageForTheClimate initiatives will take place as soon as it becomes possible. When that happens we will invite you to join us at Porta Posnania, at the Royal-Imperial Route, in the district of Jeżyce, Łazarz and Wilda as well as at the Poznań Legends Route for Children.



interview with
Professor Bogdan
Chojnicki

The nature of climate

Michał Kępski, TRAKT CTC: Let's start with the basics. What is climate?

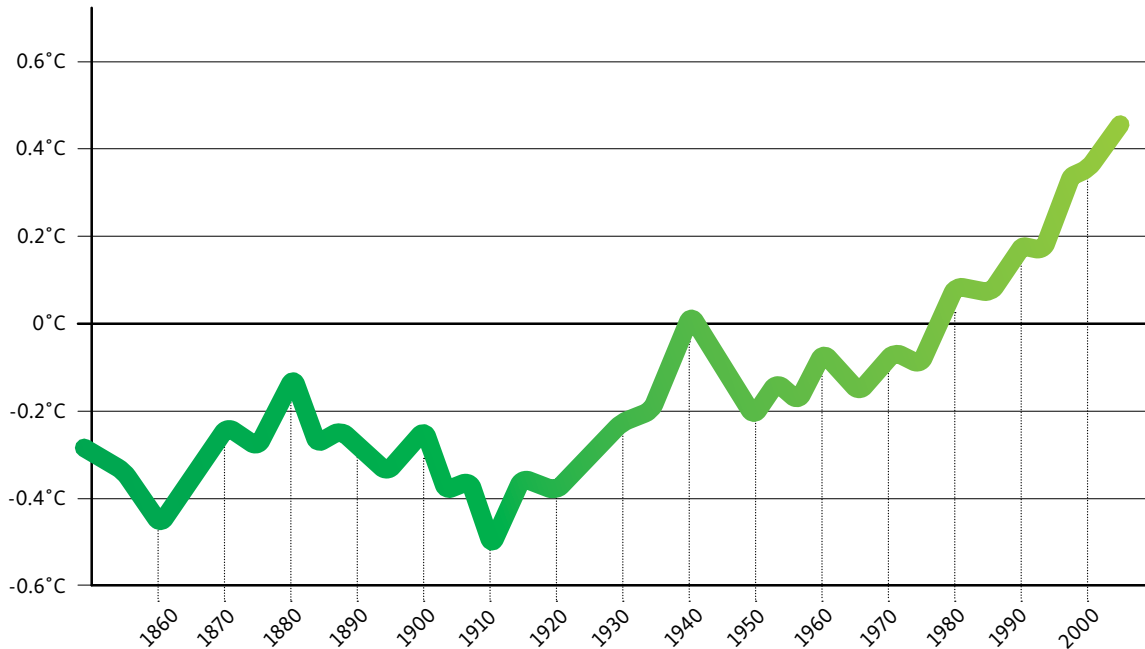
Bogdan Chojnicki: Climate is a description of weather in a given place created on the basis of observation carried out over the period of many years (at least 30 years), whereas weather are temporary meteorological conditions. This difference could be illustrated with the use of similar terms such as: human personality and emotions. Weather can be compared to emotions we feel in a given situation, whereas climate is our personality. Weather, just like emotions, can change really fast. On the other hand, to describe our personality, we need many years of observation. Thus, when we are talking about climate change we do not mean change in the temporary weather conditions but change in the overall conditions in a given place.

In today's Wielkopolska, about 12,000 years ago the last glaciation of the prehistoric Pleistocene, which formed for example the unique landscape of this region, came to an end. The average temperature was about -2°C. Since the beginning of the age of humans we have also been noticing climate fluctuations, such as for example the Medieval Warm Period (with average temperature of 0°C) or the Little Ice Age (with average temperature of -1°C). What are the factors contributing to climate change?

Changes in the climate have always been happening and their causes have been both natural and anthropogenic (resulting from the influence of human beings). Subtle changes in the Earth's position in relation to the Sun have shaped global climate for hundreds of thousands of years – they are taking place even today. However, the contemporary abrupt rise in the temperature on the Earth cannot be explained by natural causes, as this change has been taking place over the period of hundreds of years, whereas geological processes causing climate change take place over the period of tens or even hundreds of thousands of years. By the way, according to geological predictions, currently we should be noticing a slow drop in temperature. The conditions in Europe during the so-called Medieval Warm Period are often mentioned, however, it is worth noting that temperatures occurring at that time were similar to the ones observed in the 1980s. Since then, there has been an even greater rise in global temperature and now it is even higher than during this period. People, due to the emission of the greenhouse gases, have contributed to the warming up of the atmosphere.

The world is comprised of different climate zones. Are the changes which are taking place also different?

Global rise in temperature means that we can expect for example conditions which may contribute to drought alternated with rainstorm. This also leads to changing the conditions in particular



Change in global temperature in 1850-2010,
source: Climatic Research Unit (University of East Anglia)

climate zones. The area of each zone was determined on the basis of vegetation, which is a kind of a summary of the climate conditions in a given place. Although warm air contains more water, global warming does not cause rise in precipitation in all places. Observation carried out at the beginning of the 20th century indicates that precipitation increased in the eastern parts of both Americas, northern Europe and northern and central Asia. On the other hand, its decrease was noted in the Sahara, the Mediterranean Sea, in southern Africa and in southern Asia. In Poland we can observe a slight rise in precipitation, which is accompanied by the rise in temperature.

Are these changes turning the Wielkopolska region into a grassland?

Steppe formation is a process in which forest flora begins to be replaced with grassland flora. It is caused mainly by a decrease in precipitation. When it comes to Wielkopolska, the amount of

precipitation is not falling. In fact, it is even slightly rising. Therefore, we could say that the water balance in the landscape of our region is becoming more and more 'overstretched', as the rising temperature is leading to 'the landscape drying out'. The functioning of the forest ecosystems is bound to become more difficult in these new climate conditions and the species of trees comprising forests are bound to change. However, we should not expect a dramatic change and forests turning into grasslands on a large scale anytime soon.

Prof. Bogdan H. Chojnicki – employee of the Laboratory of Bioclimatology at the Poznań University of Life Sciences. He is the author of numerous publications and popular science articles on the subject of the influence of climate conditions on the functioning of ecosystems, water balance, thermal balance and the exchange of the greenhouse gases between the ecosystems and the atmosphere.

The disappearing rivers of Poznań

Prof. Renata Graf,
Prof. Dariusz
Wrzeński

Taking a stroll around Poznań, we rarely think about the way it looked like in the past when the natural environment was unspoiled. We often pass by parks and green areas, look at the Warta River and other smaller rivers flowing through the city but we do not think about their past. When we think about the city's history we often focus on its cultural heritage, including historical buildings and sites we admire such as the most famous and the oldest ones located on the Cathedral Island and in the Old Market Square. However, we tend to forget that this heritage is the result of the interaction between the people and their surrounding throughout the centuries.

The history of Poznań has been inextricably connected to the Warta River and its tributaries. Over the centuries, their role in the life of the city has changed from the defensive to the economic – connected to travelling, sailing, municipal services and industry as well as fire protection. The Warta and its tributaries were also travelling obstacles which impeded the development of the city. Adapting the river system to the needs of the city affected the living conditions of its inhabitants. In the past, the society's awareness of the potential of rivers was not as strong as it is today, which most often led to some negative changes in the water systems. Transformation of the river system, which took place in the past and is still happening, results from both climate change and the intensity of economic activity.

Human (or the so-called anthropogenic) impact varied over the centuries. However, it has been taking place continually since the establishment of the Poznań settlement on the right bank of the Warta River in the 10th century. It has included the deforestation of the area, draining wetlands, putting up new buildings, regulating the river flow, building traffic routes, dykes, bridges and facilities such as water mills, developing infrastructure providing water for drinking and for the economy, introducing flood control solutions. Thanks to the archival resources and the old cartographic documentation, we know that the city's present-day river system differs from the one in the early Middle Ages. There is no trace of the Warta's old riverbeds, distributaries and its numerous tributaries in the contemporary urban landscape. Human action led both to the changes in the hydrographic network and to lowering the level of the shallow groundwater. These phenomena intensified in Poznań from the 15th century and their progression was particularly rapid from the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Watercourses which were part of the water system in the 19th century, including the Struga Karmelicka (the Kamionka River), the so-called Rotten Warta, the Struga Rybacka and the Obrzyca River, were closed down.

Today, the city is the result of the variability of the process of development and anthropogenic changes in the landscape which began to be introduced on a large scale at the beginning of the 20th

century, when the city gained the title of ‘an open city’, and became particularly intensive in the last few decades. Together with the advancing process of urbanisation, Poznań’s topography has also changed and the city turned its back to the Warta River and moved away from it. The increase of the built-up and tight-fitted area as well as the hydraulic works on the watercourses (including covering them and integrating them into the sewage system as well as shortening and moving the riverbeds) contributed to the changes in the hydrographic network.

Over the last sixty years nearly 80 kilometres of watercourses with exposed river beds have disappeared, the length of the covered watercourses increased by about 27 kilometres, whereas the length of the wastewater collectors increased by 55 kilometres. In the 1960s the old river bed of the Warta River was filled in order to lower the risk of flooding in Poznań. The following watercourses have been either completely covered or incorporated into the sewage system: the Obrzyca River and the Naramowice Creek (the Warta River’s tributaries) as well as the Piaśnica and the Chartynia Rivers (the Cybina River’s tributaries), which today serve as rain collectors. The Starynka River, which is a small, right-bank tributary of the Warta River, was already covered before 1945. Moreover, the estuary of the Koźlanka River (previously known as the Koziegłowy Creek) was shortened and covered. Similar measures were taken in the case of the Bogdanka River, which today is divided into two underground channels below the Rusałka Reservoir and whose lower course (from Pułaskiego Street to the Warta River’s estuary) is canalised, as well as its tributaries: the Gołęcinka River, the Seganka River and the Wierzbak River. Among the left-bank tributaries of the Warta River, the Górczyński course was transformed – it was covered due to the need to protect the water supply in Dębina. Changes in the course of the rivers through canalising, moving or piping affected also the Junikowski Stream and its tributaries: the Ławica, the Skórzynka, the Ceglanka and the Plewianka located in the south-west of Poznań.

In the past the Warta River forced the inhabitants to live in a way that was dictated by its water level. Nowadays, due to the fact that its old river bed was filled, whereas its current river bed was moved and regulated, flood no longer poses a threat to the inhabitants. Contemporary problems with water in the city are caused to some extent by the climate conditions in the region. Very low rainfall (about 520 mm), in comparison with the overall situation in Poland,

relatively high temperature and high water loss due to vaporization contribute to the huge deficit in water. Warmer winters (with low snowfall) and longer periods of drought in the summer do not help rebuild the water supply. As a consequence, the rivers in Poznań are struggling with water shortages and contain less water during the year. The Warta River and its larger tributaries such as the Cybina and the Główna Rivers are more and more often experiencing periods of low water level and flow which over the last fifty years have increased to over 200 days per year. The drying out of small watercourses and the disappearance of springs are all signs of the so-called hydrological drought, which has been observed in Poznań in recent years. Urbanization makes the hydrological situation even worse because it impedes water retention in the city.

Water plays a significant role in the city’s nature and landscape setup. The importance of rivers in Poznań should increase not only due to their role in the development of the city, but also due to their ecologic and aesthetic role. To paraphrase the popular saying ‘you cannot have too much of a good thing’ – let’s all bear in mind that the excess of water in the city not always has to be a bad thing, whereas its shortage may be problematic. We should all learn how to recognise what is beneficial to Poznań’s water environment and approve of only those initiatives that are positive and beneficial to it and to the inhabitants, keeping in mind that water is “(...) heritage that has to be protected, defended and treated as such.” (the EU Water Framework Directive’s preamble).

Prof. UAM dr hab. Renata Graf – a geographer and hydrologist; holds a post-doctoral degree in the Earth Sciences; Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań; she works at the Department of Hydrology and Water Management.

Prof. UAM dr hab. Dariusz Wrzesiński – a geographer and hydrologist; holds a post-doctoral degree in the Earth Sciences, Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań; he works at the Department of Hydrology and Water Management.



F. B. Werner, *View of Poznań from the south-east*, source: the National Museum in Poznań



Listening to the city

Anna Piłkuła
TRAKT CTC

Close your eyes and recall a city you have recently visited which made a huge impression on you. What comes to your mind? The city's layout, some buildings which stand out, colours, the crowd in the streets or the lack of it... What about sounds – do you recall any particular sound of the place? Did it have a positive or negative influence on you? Did it help you get to know the area you visited?

Our perception of the surrounding is dominated by visual experiences. Sight is the most fundamental sense which we use to discover the world. Even cities are designed in such a way as to provide us with the best possible visual experiences. Research on the phenomenon of cities also focuses mainly on their visual aspect. Such an approach neglects the whole area of sounds which accompany particular landscapes and influence the way we perceive and experience them. Even though we are rarely aware of it.

The term soundscape, meaning the whole acoustic environment, was coined in the 1960s by the Canadian composer Raymond Murray Schafer. What was important for him was how the environment is understood by those who live in it. Being in a certain place, we also become part of its acoustic environment and have influence on it. The relationship between the listener and the environment does not mean passive reception of energy but it is rather part of a dynamic system of exchange of information.

Due to the development of civilisation, the acoustic environment has become polluted. This is what we call noise. As a result, the

listener is separated from the environment in which he or she is. Noise pollution (buzz, noise) leads to a situation in which we are unable to recognise other sounds providing information about the surrounding. As a result, our sensitivity to sound is lower. Schafer encourages us to be conscious listeners and develop our sonological competence, that is to practice perceiving (hearing) and recognising soundscapes. Schafer calls this 'ear cleaning'.

We would like to invite you to practice 'ear cleaning' during our summer temporary exhibition at Porta Posnania. We are going to focus on the soundscape of the area around Porta Posnania and try to listen together to its environment and recognise particular sounds constituting it. We are going to look for its characteristic features which contribute to its uniqueness as well as the elements which interfere with its perception and distort it. Finally, we are going to reflect on the issue of whether soundscape should be protected just like other elements of heritage.

So prick up your ears and visit our exhibition!

The exhibition "Sounds of Cybina"
will be held at Porta Posnania in 2021,
(the exhibition will be translated into English).
Free admission!



Hersong / tupieśń – Cybina, Paulina Miu Concert

Amphitheatre by the Cybina River, Porta Posnania 2018, photo: Ł. Gdak TRAKT CTC

Children are a catalyst for change

interview with
Ola Woldańska-
Płocińska



Natalia Szenrok-Brożyńska, TRAKT CTC: In your books you touch the broadly defined issue of the impact of people's actions on the natural environment. The historical perspective is important for you. For instance, when you write about rubbish you talk about packages and present the history of applied arts and ancient vases displayed in museums, whereas when you focus on the relationship between people and animals, you remind us that in some cultures animals used to be greatly respected, even worshipped like for instance cats in ancient Egypt. How important, in your opinion, is the historical perspective in educating children and adults about climate change?

Ola Woldańska-Płocińska: These historical introductions were the result of how I personally have approached the subject when I began the work on the idea for the book. I realised that the historical overview helps me organise my knowledge. That is why I decided that it should be included in the book because if it was helping me, it would probably also be useful for others. It was quite natural in *Śmieciogród* (a book about rubbish) because I teach students at the Packaging Design Studio at the University of the Arts in Poznań. We use part of this knowledge to help students understand that packages were not invented fifty or seventy years ago but they have been with us from the very beginning. I think that it is useful to learn about a broader time perspective when we familiarise ourselves with a new subject. However, it may be more difficult when it comes to the subject of climate change because in this case we are talking about long processes rather than specific facts.

Contemporary children are flooded with advertisements of new items. It is hard to resist the impression that they already have everything and they are up to their ears in toys. Yet, there are still new temptations and new needs. All of this poses a great challenge for the parents. How should we talk to children about climate change so that we do not impose further rules and bans. What works best in your opinion?

In my opinion (and I know this from my own experience) parents often have the same temptation (if not bigger) to buy new things as children. Maybe not when these children are already teenagers. But let's imagine an infant. It does not need any of those advertised gadgets. It is the parents who feel the temptation, which sometimes is passed down to children. The best approach is to set a good example and simply resist buying things yourself. We can start with writing down on a piece of paper a list of things we bought in a given month (food and cleaning supplies do not count). It is like writing down the things we ate in a day. Not a big deal, yet when you start writing, soon the whole sheet of paper is full. At least, this is what happens to me [laugh].

In 2008 Bea Johnson eliminated rubbish from her and her family's life. Today her family's yearly rubbish fits into a single 1 litre jar. Thanks to her blog and her book *Zero Waste* (a bestseller translated into 12 languages), Bea became the initiator of the global zero waste movement. She encourages people to simplify their lifestyle and radically reduce the amount of waste they produce, following five rules: refuse (don't buy), reduce (buy less), reuse, recycle, rot. In 2017 her book *Zero Waste Home. The ultimate guide to simplifying your life by reducing your waste* was published in Poland.

Coming back to your question about climate change, I do believe in the power of good example set by parents. That means more doing, less talking. On the other hand, we should not blame ourselves and, more importantly, the children if not everything goes well from the very beginning. It is really hard to become Bea Johnson straight away.

News on the pace, the scope and the consequences of climate change can make one feel powerless. They can even make adults fall into depression. Hence, they definitely may scare small children. For example, the news on the amount of plastic which surrounds us, which we produce and consume, destroying ourselves and our environment. How can we, therefore, avoid the difficult facts and talk to children about the future with this in mind?

Perhaps we should not focus on the negative consequences but on the positive results of some local initiative aiming to improve the situation. I think that action which produces visible results is the best for children (and probably not only for them). The news on the great island of trash, which is the size of France, floating in the ocean was very sensational (yet not entirely true). Its aim was probably to attract attention of those who had still not noticed that we are having a problem with environment pollution. It seems that today such actions are not needed, as we are all aware of the problem. On the other hand, every apple or dessert at my son's school is still being served in a plastic bag. We may not be able to remove this patch of trash ourselves but we can try to change the way meals are served at schools. And if the system resists the change, we can give up on it and take our own food in a food jar and set a good example.

Do you think that children find it easier to adopt good practice which has influence on protecting the environment in everyday life than adults? To what extent can children be the driving force behind positive change in their families and communities?

Fantastic question! I wrote those books because for me it is obvious that it is the children who are a catalyst for change and their awareness is going to help them exert positive pressure on adults (however, when I presented this point of view to others, not everyone found it as obvious as I did). I think that introducing changes in our everyday lives so as the way we live is less harmful

to the environment is difficult and requires energy and time, which adults often lack. Children, on the other hand, have plenty of both (or at least more than we do) and they simply are more eager to act. What may be difficult for them at certain age, however, is the issue of wanting to belong to some group and be like their peers. That is why little individuals who are eager to act differently than the rest and instil new eco-friendly behaviours are so important.

What do you think about the education system in Poland in terms of teaching about the issues pertaining to climate change? I am talking about schools, kindergartens and widely available products of culture, books and films presenting the subject as well as about whether teachers are prepared to do this. Do you think that we have the necessary resources to educate?

I do not feel competent enough to assess the education system and the knowledge of our teachers. I can only talk about my own experience on the basis of one kindergarten and one school. Two issues come to my mind: first of all, I truly believe in the power of setting an example, which means teaching children by providing them opportunities to engage in good practice instead of imparting theoretical knowledge (that is why I write books). Unfortunately, many institutions I encountered put more emphasis on telling children why plastic is bad, while at the same time, every day they serve them drinks in disposable containers. The second issue refers to the need to change the way we perceive the problem and, consequently, the way we perceive education on how to segregate waste and, more importantly, how not to produce it.

Ola Woldańska-Płocińska is from Kalisz. She studied Graphic Design at the University of the Arts in Poznań. Currently, she is Assistant Lecturer at the University's Packaging Design Studio. She makes illustrations and designs posters and books, not only for children. So far, several books with her drawings have been published, including some written by her. The most recent titles *Zwierzokracja* and *Śmieciogród* touch the issue of climate change.



Memories of nature — extracts from the Śródka Community Archive

Michał
Kierzkowski

I have recently heard Witold Lenart, who is a climatologist at the University of Warsaw, say that: “whenever we are unsure whether the impact of our activity in the environment will be purely positive and beneficial, the right thing to do is to abandon it altogether. For human beings are far from comprehending the whole mysterious net of relationships in nature”. Reflecting upon the meaning of these words, which are very up-to-date considering the changes taking place in nature today, I thought about the conversations I have been having for almost 6 years while working on the project of the Śródka Community Archive. When I had a closer look at the reminiscences of the several dozen people who for years have been connected to the district of Śródka and the surrounding area, it occurred to me that nature has always been an important part of the everyday life of this small but independent community.

The districts of Śródka, Zagórze and the Cathedral Island are places inevitably associated with two watercourses: the Warta and the Cybina Rivers. For an ordinary inhabitant of Poznań these two rivers are just places for Saturday walks or the site

where the officers of the law wrestle with criminals in Ryszard Ćwirlej’s crime novels. However for the local inhabitants, they have played an important role in the lives of their communities. Probably all of Śródka’s and Zagórze’s inhabitants’ reminiscences mention childhood or adolescence spent by the Cybina River. This river, which nowadays could actually be considered a seasonal and constantly polluted watercourse, used to be a unique sports and recreation hub. In the summer the river banks would turn into beaches serving the inhabitants living nearby as a place for relaxation. Its clean water used to be the first place where many learnt how to swim: “When it comes to nature and the natural environment, we had a beautiful childhood in Zagórze (...) The water was very clean, very clear, there was no pollution, there were no algae because it was filtered all the time” (E. Żyłańska-Lik). “Before the war, during the occupation and after it, life centred around the Cybina. Lying on the fine sand, swimming in it [the river]” (J. Śmierzchalska). The fact that the place was attractive and close meant that people had no need to use other water attractions in the city: “Here in Śródka, hardly anyone couldn’t swim, and the Cybina River was a paradise. It was

not as it is today. The water was fine (...) Mothers would bring us dinner to the Cybina because no one wanted to come back home. We spent entire days, the whole summer by the Cybina" (H. Urbaś). "I took my children to the Cybina when they were little. There was this little ditch where the children would play. It was our refuge; kids, blankets. Above all, it was not deep, the water was clean. We did not go to any swimming pools with the children back then, only there". (E. Hofman).

In winter the rivers of Poznań also offered the inhabitants of Śródka – especially the youngest – space for play and sports challenges: "We did not need any ice rinks, as the Cybina would freeze. You could safely skate here by the fortifications. You could take advantage of these attractions virtually throughout the whole winter" (M. Dondajewski). "When we had the winters of the century, the Cybina would freeze. In the evenings, we would play ice hockey, the team was from Śródka" (J. Strugarek). Nature and water were literally at one's fingertips. Their presence in the daily life of the inhabitants of the aforementioned districts was

considered obvious, as something that has always been there: "in winter – the ice rink, in the summer we were the sharks of the Cybina" (Z. Wesółowski).

Living with the forces of nature and the nature itself did not mean using the Warta and the Cybina's gifts only during the summer and winter. We can see that if we delve deep into the inhabitant's memories of autumn: "first and foremost, we would fly our kites here, behind the fortifications. We would make them with our friends specifically for this purpose when the autumn wind came. Grandpa helped us make the kites but not like the ones you can buy today. They were made of small wooden boards and you would put paper on it, a long tail made of newspapers, and we would fly them by these tracks because there were no power lines there. We did this every year. I was so happy that the autumn was coming and we would be flying kites. You don't see that today" (B. Daczkus). Autumn is also the time when trees change their 'physis'. The species particularly associated with this season is a horse chestnut. It is also present in the memories of



Photo taken by the Malta Lake, the 1950s,
source: Grzegorz Sobkowiak's collection

the inhabitants of Śródka: “the establishment for the deaf-mute, which was next to our house, was also attractive. The magnificent horse chestnuts which were an attraction for everyone in the autumn. We used chestnuts as currency we would exchange. They are growing up to this day” (M. Dondajewski).

Let me finish my ‘itinerarium’, presenting nature in the memories of the inhabitants of Śródka and the surrounding areas, with some memories of the spring. This season seems to be the most intense when it comes to sensual and aesthetic experiences in direct contact with nature for a reason. Blooming plants as well as ripe fruit and vegetables fill our perception of the surrounding with clear colours, shapes and scents. It is clearly visible if we look at some bigger areas such as the gardens on the Cathedral Island: “I remember the garden where we used to go to get some vegetables. The archbishop’s nuns would pick vegetables from there (...) there were vegetables growing as far as to the tracks. I know that there was a gardener but I don’t remember his name. One man took care of all this. It seems unbelievable today that he on his own and without any equipment, only using some rake, was able to take care of this so that it was clean and beautiful. Besides, the archbishop’s garden was also always tidy. I remember that there were crab apples growing there, so small. For the next 30-40 years I haven’t seen them anywhere” (B. Daczus). Equally intense memories are connected to individual plants such as for example a lilac bush growing at the top of the Cathedral Lock: “(...) the top was covered with earth and there were lilac bushes growing there, which sometimes would grow into the cracks between the bricks. Sometimes my friend Arthur would pull them [from the ground] so that they did not damage his roof. I have particularly fond memories of them because Arthur would come to me with a huge armful of [lilacs] and best wishes (...) for my name day, which takes place in May. The lilac bush was purple and smelled beautiful because it grew wild” (A. Pudelska).

Today it is hard to find traces of this coexistence with nature in the landscape of Śródka and the surrounding area. Times have changed. So did the inhabitants, their attitude towards nature and their need to be close to it. The memories, however, which constitute the history of the place, the people and their relationship with the area, remained. One could once secretly pick a ripe apple from the archbishop’s garden, clean it in the clear waters of the Cybina and enjoy eating it. But today...

The Śródka Community Archive was created to collect material on the history of Śródka – one of the oldest districts in Poznań. We are gathering the traces of the past of this place, such as photos, memories and memorabilia, in cooperation with local inhabitants. Currently, the Archive comprises hundreds of photos from the inhabitants’ private collections as well as interviews with them. We use the oral history methodology during the interviews. We collect them to preserve the past of the place and save it before it is forgotten but also in order to talk about it – we organise numerous exhibitions and publish books which comprise a series titled *Trzeba by jeszcze powiedzieć*. We would like to invite everyone whose past is connected to Śródka to share their memories and photos with us.

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Michał Kierzkowski – graduate of the Faculty of Historical Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University (history major). In 2010 he defended his PhD thesis titled *Oral history as a research method of history. Study on the history and methodology*. He received a scholarship of the Kosciuszko Foundation Poland – Visiting Scholar at the University of Buffalo, the State University of New York. He is the author of several articles and summaries and a co-editor of publications.

How to win the green game. Few words on Poznań's relationship with nature

Maciej
Moszyński
TRAKT CTC

From the very beginning human beings have been creatures driven by the need to conquer. Over thousands of years they have increased their impact on the environment and used its resources. They did this at the age of tribal migration, when they moved from place to place in small or large groups, as well as when they started their first permanent settlements. What distinguishes people from millions of species living on Earth is one peculiar feature – they have always tried to adjust the surrounding to their own needs.

The areas in which the natural environment has been particularly changed by people are historical cities. One thousand years ago, people started building a settlement on the Cathedral Island, which marked the beginning of the great process of development. Its characteristic feature was a continuing impact on the local nature on an unprecedented scale. To build the 10-metres-high and 2-kilometres-long ramparts, people needed an enormous amount of building materials, in particular wood from the forests surrounding the island. In the places where people cut down the

trees, new animal and plant species, which were typical for open areas, began to appear.

The strategic decision to locate the settlement on a river island was key for the local natural environment. It was a pragmatic decision, as the river constituted a natural defence system. Moreover, it was also a travelling route and a source of food. What impeded the development of the settlement, however, was the unpredictability of the forces of nature. For centuries the inhabitants of the island have raised the ground level, built dykes and moats, and cut and burnt huge parts of forests in order to protect themselves from seasonal floods.

In the middle of the 13th century, when Poznań received a city charter and was moved to the right bank of the Warta River, the human impact on the natural environment increased even more. Levelling out the area of some 21 hectares, where a town square and a network of streets was to be built, and its development



K. Alberti. *View of St Adalbert*,
source: the National Museum in Poznań

required large-scale earthworks. The city was surrounded with a defence wall, which was initially made of wood and earth, and later turned into a stone wall. The material for building the fortifications, public buildings and houses was mostly found in the surrounding area. The city cooperated with settlements and craftsmen' suburbs, which were located outside of its walls. These constituted the food supply for the city's inhabitants. As a result, the surrounding landscape was soon deprived of forests which were replaced with farmlands.

Water, which no longer encountered any natural barriers and almost completely surrounded Poznań through numerous tributaries and distributaries of the Warta River, was more and more involved in 'writing' the history of the city. People tried to protect themselves

from the regularly occurring floods by moving the watercourses, strengthening the river banks and building embankments and dykes. The moat played a particular role in the city's water network. It was an open ditch – part of the defence system. At the same time, it was a source of drinking water and a sewer. This fusion of roles was the cause of both frequent epidemics and the degradation of the natural environment. This was particularly visible in Garbary, which was a suburban settlement back then, where the waste produced in the process of leather tanning and thrown to the moat was the source of the most troublesome pollution.

In the middle of the 17th century, that is at the times of endless wars and the devastation of Poznań by foreign armies, people focused on the development of the fortifications, which caused

further transformation of the suburban landscape. At the same time, it was the age of the most disastrous floods in the history of the city. In 1736 one of such floods resulted in the Warta overflowing virtually the whole Poznań and destroying two-thirds of the houses within its boundaries. No wonder that the process of moving the whole settlement away from the river picked up the pace. New settlements and suburbs were set up higher and further away from the Warta River. If possible, out of the reach of its destructive power.

The end of the 18th century teemed with political events. At the same time, it was the turning point in the way people thought about the city and its surrounding. Poznań was in decline due to wars and natural disasters. It needed profound changes, which was noticed by the Commission of Good Order (Boni Ordinis) established in the Enlightenment. Its initiatives were the first sign of drawing attention to the broadly defined public order in the urban agglomeration. One of the decrees issued by the Commission pertained to the ban on planting trees along the most important routes around Poznań. The moment the region of Wielkopolska was taken over by Prussia was the beginning of the process of extending the city's boundaries and incorporating the neighbouring towns into the city. The city centre was moved to the west. It was then that people began to consciously introduce greenery in the cities. They planted trees along the newly-built streets and set up flower-beds and house gardens.

However, this symbiosis between the city and nature, which had only just began, did not last long. In 1828 Poznań was turned into a fortress, which had a negative influence on the greenery. There was no space for parks and gardens in the small area constricted by the ring of forts. In response to this, in 1834 a group of inhabitants established the Society for Beautifying the City and the Surrounding Areas (Towarzystwo do Upiękrzania Miasta i jego Okolic). At its initiative, trees were systematically planted along the streets and city squares. The Society also contributed to the creation of the first public green area in the city, which is today known as the Green Gardens (Zielone Ogródki). On the other hand, it was the time of intensifying the human impact on the environment. In order to acquire the grounds intended for building, which the area surrounded by the fortifications lacked, many streams, meadows and wetlands were filled. Some watercourses were turned into sewers, and their banks were transformed.

Soon it turned out that the fortifications not only did not increase the security of the inhabitants in case of flood, but they actually lowered it. Disasters occurred numerous times. The water entered the city, remaining in some parts of it for several weeks. As a result of these and other events, at the beginning of the 20th century, it was decided that Poznań would no longer be a fortress and the city boundaries would be extended. The urban planner Josef Stübgen designed a system of radial-peripheral rings in the interior part of the fortifications. Parks and squares were a crucial part of this system. Introducing open areas and greenery into the city as well as providing access to the fresh air was a breakthrough which improved the quality of life of the inhabitants. However, the city was still expanding without any systematic plan that would ensure protection of its natural environment. It was only during the interwar period when the European ideas aiming to stop the uncontrolled expansion and setting up new buildings in the natural green areas finally reached Poznań. Władysław Czarnecki and Adam Wodiczko, inspired by these ideas, created an innovative system of green wedges, according to which green corridors along the Warta, the Cybina and the Bogdanka Rivers would be preserved in the city. The system was supposed to affect the plans for the future development of Poznań. Over the years, however, it lost the battle with the short-sighted policy focusing on the current needs. The policy which at first was centrally-planned and then subordinate to the principles of the free market.

TRAKT Cultural Tourism Centre is soon going to release a new folder which will be part of the series of the Royal-Imperial Route's publications on tourism and culture. The subject of this folder will be the history of the coexistence between the river and nature and the inhabitants of Poznań. The brochure will be also available in English online.

'Landscape cultivation' in Poznań

Adam Wodziezko (1887–1948)

Michał Kępski
TRAKT CTC

Landscape architecture – as the ability to arrange outdoor areas with the use of plants, street furniture, landforms and water – is a field known to people from the turn of the 19th and 20th century. It was born out of the centuries-old tradition of gardening. The discipline objectified nature, reducing its value to a purely aesthetic function. A different approach to shaping everything that surrounds human beings was proposed by the Poznań biologist and botanist Adam Wodziezko.

Wodziezko, who coined and popularized terms such as 'physiotactics', 'landscape cultivation' and 'steppe-formation in Wielkopolska', was born in Słotwina – a little town which was under the Austrian authority during the Partition. He received education and began his first research and didactic work at the Jagiellonian University before the First World War. In 1919, after the war ended, he moved to Poznań where his academic career and social activity was in full blossom. After five years he became the head of the University of Poznań's Botanic Garden (he held this position till the end of his life; one of the things he did was to rebuild the Garden after it was destroyed during the Second World War). In 1925 he was appointed professor at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Poznań, and in 1938 he created the Cross-Faculty Seminar on Biocenology and Nature Conservation. It was one of his most important projects. The Seminar's regular meetings were an opportunity to discuss the subjects of ecology as well as landscape and nature conservation. This was a truly trailblazing initiative. After the Second World War, already in 1945, the first independent Department of Nature Conservation and Landscape Cultivation in Poland was established at the Faculty of General Botany at the University of Poznań.

Wodziezko's research and didactic work was complemented by his engagement in the work for the common good. As a member of many societies and institutions (for example the Poznań Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences, the Nature Conservation League, the Polish Botanic Society and the International Nomenclature Commission) he was actively engaged in the work on protecting the whole natural system. He participated in the work on establishing the national parks including the Tatra National Park, the Pieniny National Park and the Babia Góra National Park. He was particularly interested in and amazed by the Wielkopolska region. However, despite his great involvement in the project, he did not live to see the establishment of the National Park of Wielkopolska which took place in 1957 after his death.

Already in the 1920s Wodziezko noticed the problem of excessive human impact on the natural environment and informed the public about it. He drew the society's attention to the negative consequences of such practices as deforestation, wetland drainage, regulation of the flow of rivers and streams, and removing natural elements from the areas intended for land cultivation. He created his own idea of how landscape should be managed:

"Just like maintaining land efficiency is called land cultivation, so the activities directed towards the landscape as a whole which aim to maintain its value are called landscape cultivation. [...] Taking care of the landscape requires ensuring that it is kept in good health, which means maintaining and enhancing the productive potential of land and water. We have to maintain healthy water circulation in the landscape through the natural water resource management, fight



Glacial lakes in the area of today's National Park of Wielkopolska, photo: M. Orłowicz, 1935, public domain, source: The National Library of Poland

erosion, 'farmer's hidden whip', maintain and increase the soil's hummus, plant copses for birds and replant trees in the middle of fields because this is how we can protect the landscape from decomposition, maintain its biological balance and create new national and economic assets [...] Taking care of the landscape has nothing to do with 'beautifying the landscape', 'forest aesthetics' and other similar artificial beautifying treatments [...] We have to manage the nature's resources well, keeping the landscape as a whole in mind and not limiting this management to the use of a piece of land. This is the condition we have to meet in order to take care of the landscape effectively."

Adam Wodziczko created the theoretical background for the ecological approach to the environment protection. He was not interested in preserving only some chosen natural elements such as particular animal and plant species or inanimate nature. In his work, he highlighted the importance of noticing the value of the landscape as a collection of various elements. Landscape cultivation which he proposed, was supposed to be such management of the land that it would prevent the balance between human and non-human environment from getting upset.



Nature-based solutions in cities

Agnieszka
Osipiuk

Photo: Michał Strokowski

WILL GREEN WEDGES SUFFICE?

Looking at the map of Poznań, it is easy to distinguish a characteristic wedge-ring green system. The description of the way the wedges work and their benefits constitutes a ready-made idea for an innovative, large-scale project on climate change adaptation. Or it would be, were it not for one tiny fact: today green wedges are hardly new and innovative. They have a long, and not always appreciated, history. For a long time, the wedge-ring system, which was designed in the 1930s by Władysław Czarnecki (in cooperation with professor Adam Wodziczko) has been the most fundamental and precious natural resource in our city. The system is comprised of four main wedges and two rings, which separate city districts from one another, constituting wide walls of trees and small plants between them as well as providing the city with fresh air and the

air with humidity. Over the years, the fact that the wedges are tight and connected to the rings led to the creation of wildlife corridors. They contribute to the exchange of animals and plant species in the city and biodiversity. In the meantime, the development of the city and housing has gradually put the system under pressure, especially in the city centre.

Establishing new parks and urban forests would definitely improve the existing system. However, it is not always possible. How can we, therefore, ensure good quality of life for the inhabitants of Poznań, which is embodied in the access to the green areas, especially when the buildings are put up so close to one another? The answer lies in the small-scale interventions, which are sometimes called urban acupuncture: pocket parks, green walls and roofs, rain gardens and floating gardens, unsealed natural playgrounds, community gardens

and opening access, to a greater or lesser extent, to open gardens belonging to public institutions and private owners.

SMALL-SCALE INITIATIVES... ON A LARGE SCALE

“Integrating various small-scale solutions based on nature (such as pocket parks or community gardens) in the districts where buildings are set up very close to one another will contribute to bringing to life the long-term vision of Poznań as a green city, which can reconcile the high quality of life with sustainable development of infrastructure and fast economic growth of the city” (source: CONNECTING Nature – Synteza badań poszukiwawczych w Poznaniu, Osmos and UAM, 2018).

Poznań CONNECTING Nature team, which was created at the Project Coordination and City Revitalisation Office at the Poznań City Council, is responsible for devising, researching and promoting small-scale, nature-based solutions in the city. The team cooperates with other city departments and entities, in particular with Adam Mickiewicz University.

Since 2017, thanks to the aforementioned international cooperation which is co-financed by the Framework Programme Horizon 2020, Poznań has been building natural playgrounds at kindergartens, establishing floating gardens, opening gardens belonging to kindergartens for the inhabitants, and developing an education offer based on the so-called ‘ekodemonstratory’, which are devices, pieces of furniture and other elements in the city made of natural materials. The city has been also searching for alternative sources of funding and financial models which would make it possible not only to introduce some green innovations but also to ensure their long-term operation. Furthermore, the city analyses the local service sector connected to the nature-based solutions and identifies companies and organisations working in this field (NBE – nature-based enterprises).

In July 2020 Poznań was to host the CONNECTING Nature Poznań Enterprise Summit. Due to the situation in Poland and abroad connected to the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, the event has to be postponed to autumn 2020 or even to 2021. The situation has also put more emphasis on some of the NBS issues. The aim of the Poznań Enterprise Summit is to share experience and the challenges faced by both the representatives of the industries

connected to nature-based solutions and the companies which introduce such solutions into their social responsibility strategies. Poznań Enterprise Summit will also be an opportunity to demonstrate other flagship projects such as natural playgrounds and open gardens.

The epidemiological situation which cities around the world have found themselves in as well as the necessity to isolate draw our attention to such aspects of the nature-based solutions as the accessibility and the size of the public green areas. A new issue of the degree to which the industry of the green and blue infrastructure services can be affected by compulsory isolation and restrictions on the economic activity has also arisen.

Porta Posnania, an institution which combines history and cultural and natural heritage, is the partner of the CONNECTING Nature Poznań Enterprise Summit.

In 2019 CONNECTING Nature’s team cooperated with the On Water Foundation and Porta Posnania to build a floating garden. The aim of the garden was to create habitat for animals, filter water and lower the risk of heat stress. The project was accompanied by thematic workshops for families – Floating islands for the Cybina’s fauna. The City of Poznań is working with Porta Posnania on further projects introducing nature-based solutions into the public space.

Agnieszka Osipiuk – Chief Specialist on interdisciplinary projects at the Project Coordination and City Revitalisation Office at the Poznań City Council, coordinator of the Health&Greenspace Project (URBACT III Programme), member of the CONNECTING Nature project team (Horizon 2020). For several years, she has been managing international projects.



Dictionary of urban terms — green revitalisation

Gathered by
**Agnieszka
Osipiuk**

Floating gardens are light, floating islands which create habitat and filter water. The main purpose of the floating gardens is to introduce greenery to the city centres, increase their biodiversity, enhance local population, create an ecological niche and filter the air and water. Floating gardens provide conditions for developing unique ecosystems in cities. The vegetation comprises mainly local species. The gardens grow thanks to the seeds transported by the wind and birds.

Natural playground is a place which combines the elements traditionally used in children's playgrounds with the elements found in the natural environment: natural sand, earth or grass surface, green elements such as hills and paths with naturally occurring tree boughs. There are also specially-created elements encouraging playing with live plants such as bush mazes, live wicker huts and paths made of tree trunks and logs for physical games. Children can play there freely using sand, water and other natural resources. They can also grow plants and observe insects. Moreover, there are elements typical for gardens such as benches, arbors and tables which may be used for relaxation as well as for activities with children. Some elements may be designed individually and specifically for a particular playground. These may be used in many different ways for example as dais or walls for interactive games.

Open gardens are an example of the use of the existing green areas belonging to particular institutions or private owners and opening them, to a greater or lesser extent, to the inhabitants. Not only local inhabitants, but also non-government organisations, community councils, people visiting nearby institutions and others may engage in them.

Pocket park is a small park open to the public. The maximal size of this green area is 5,000 m². They are often established at the initiative of local residents.

Nature-based solutions (NBS) are solutions inspired by nature which are cost-effective (economically productive). They are also ecologically, economically and socially beneficial and support climate change adaptation.

Examples of NBSs: street greenery, parks, urban forests, pocket gardens, natural playgrounds, open gardens, floating gardens, rain gardens, community gardens, green walls, green roofs.

Nature-based enterprises (NBE) comprise companies and initiatives which base their work on nature either directly (planning, revitalisation) or indirectly (monitoring, consulting, designing).

Examples of NBEs: companies committed to sustainable forest management, gardening companies, architects and designers, companies providing green infrastructure products and services (for example green roofs, green walls), non-government institutions which support for example the management of natural urban forests, companies monitoring and assessing the consequences of the influence of NBSs.

interview
with Anna
Sierpińska

Is this already

Marcin Słomiński, TRAKT CTC: The climate is changing and we know it. Several years ago denying global climate change was still common in public debate. Today, however, even the most hardened deniers seem to have accepted the fact that 'something is happening'. Yet, the causes of the phenomenon are still being questioned. How sure can we be that the global climate change affecting us is of anthropogenic origin?

Anna Sierpińska: Actually, we can be 100 per cent sure. The beginnings of climatology as a scientific discipline date back to the first half of the 19th century. 200 years is quite a long time to increase knowledge on any subject. For several dozen years we have had at our disposal advance methods to study the past and present condition of the Earth (satellites, isotope analysis). This helped us test various hypotheses, including those relating to climate change. About 30 years ago, this whole knowledge gathered throughout the years, which had been enriched by scientists from various fields including atmospheric physicists, oceanologists, glaciologists and biologists, already allowed us to explicitly say that what lies behind the rise of the Earth's average temperature is the change in the atmosphere's composition resulting from people's economic activity, mostly from burning fossil fuels during which carbon dioxide is emitted. For these 30 years no other hypotheses have emerged which after close examination would explain what is happening on the Earth. What we observe, instead, is that the predictions of climatologists, which were made several or several dozen years ago, are now coming true. Therefore, today scientists have no doubt – their view on climate change is shared by all large scientific organisations, including among other the Polish Academy of Sciences and similar institutions in China, Russia and the United States.

We have put the climate machine out of order. The Earth is getting overheated. Extreme weather conditions resulting from this are taking place right in front of our eyes and we all – globally – have to deal with their consequences. Images of fierce fires in Australia, heatwaves and record-breaking drought circulate around the media all over the world. The scale of the change is shocking. The situation is called either climate change, climate crisis or climate catastrophe. Is this catastrophe already taking place or is it just approaching? Is it still possible to revert the vector of change or at least to slow it down?

We can already observe dangerous and disastrous consequences of climate change in many regions. These consequences do not occur with the same intensity around the world, which may be the reason why in many places we already talk of a catastrophe, whereas in others it is hard to believe in it. This, however, does not change the fact that changes in the climate of the Earth are taking place on a huge scale and, unfortunately, they are getting more and more dramatic. What is most important now is to slow down their pace. The slower they are, the easier it will be for us to adapt to the Earth's new climate. Some changes, such as the melting of glaciers, are irreversible. At least not in the course of life of a single person or even the whole generation. However, the smaller the rise of global temperature, the greater the chance to keep our environment in the way that is most favourable for us.

Looking through the window, we can see a river – this is the Cybina River, which is the right tributary of the Warta River. We got used to the fact that it lacks water. The whole region of Wielkopolska is suffering from drought. This year, however, we could observe dramatically low water levels already in winter.

a catastrophe?

Can we connect drought, low water levels and the disappearance of rivers to global climate change?

Yes, we can. Climate change does have some influence on this situation. Changes occurring globally translate into what is happening in particular regions. Many people over 30-40 years old must have noticed that snow rarely appears in winter in Poland, and when it finally does, there is very little of it and it soon disappears. This melting snow would once fall into streams and ground water, thanks to which we had water supplies in the spring. Today, these supplies no longer exist, and warm (or even hot) springs and summers exacerbate the problem with water. This is of course only one of the causes. There are also other contributing factors when it comes to rivers and lakes, for example the issue of the regulation of the flow of the rivers and changes in land use.

Many people realise the need to take care of the world surrounding us and are trying to take some action to do it. Frequently, however, these initiatives are put in one bag with the label 'ecology', taken with a grain of salt and considered peculiar and out of touch with reality. It has to be said that sometimes it can be confusing: the changing climate, the problem of low emission, the problem with waste and water retention capacity. Someone might ask whether these are separate issues or they have a common denominator. Can an ordinary Pole have any influence on the global phenomena relating to the climate? Do our decisions as individual consumers make any difference at all?

Depending on the perspective, one could give different answers to the question on whether these issues have a common denominator or not. Personally, I do see something in common here: the lack

of a coherent vision of what kind of world we want to live in. Today, everything is subordinate to the paradigm of economic growth. Most often, we do not even question that: this is what it is supposed to be, the economy has to grow because, as the economists would have us believe, our prosperity depends on it. However, this approach makes us often lose sight of the more important matters such as our health, safety and the quality of life. If these issues were considered a priority for example by politicians, it would probably be possible to shape the law in a way that would allow us to cope with various environmental (and social) problems. Here lies also the answer to the question about what we as individuals can do: we can 'push' politicians to make them treat these issues as truly important. Our choices as consumers, for example the way we decide to commute to our workplace, also matter. However, let's remember that sometimes many people do not have a choice: shutting down public transport means that they are forced to travel by their own car. It is incredibly inspiring and positive, of course, when someone decides to change their lifestyle because they care about others – for example, they think about the world their children are going to live in or about what their friends and neighbours' surrounding is going to look like. Perhaps these individual actions, including the ones involving exerting pressure on politicians, are the first little steps on our way to greater changes in policies, which are what we really need.

Anna Sierpińska – populariser of science; specialises in the subject of the influence of climate change on the natural environment; for 4 years she has been involved in the work on the portal Naukaoklimacie.pl; she graduated from the Warsaw University of Life Sciences.

How to be a responsible tourist

Marcin
Słomiński
TRAKT CTC

Tourism is (...) an ideological framing of history, nature, and tradition, (...) [which] has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs

Dean MacCannell *The Tourist:
A New Theory of the Leisure Class*

There are still people among us who remember the times when travelling to another province was a rare event. Moreover, people did not travel for pleasure but to satisfy their most fundamental needs or to escape some threat. In the first half of the 20th century travelling for pleasure was still reserved almost entirely for the small group of the well-off.

Today one of the main driving forces behind the mobility of the people from the wealthy Global North is tourism. The possibility to travel for pleasure is an achievement of our civilisation and society. It is directly connected to the right to rest, which is understood as one of the fundamental human rights. However, it is also a privilege which entails responsibility.

At least from the second half of the 20th century we are talking about the phenomenon of mass tourism. According to the data collected by the United Nations World Tourism Organization, there were about 25 million foreign travels in 1950, whereas in 2018 the number increased by 60 per cent to about 1,5 billion. If we add the

huge number of national travels, including one-day recreational trips, to this, we can imagine an enormous swarm of people who are moving either because they want to or because they have to.

At the same time, the population of cities increased from 751 million to 4,5 billion. The moment when more people started living in cities than outside of them was noted for the first time in history in this passing decade.

These two global mega trends – the growing popularity of tourism and the increasing importance of cities – intertwine in the phenomenon called city or urban tourism.

We travel to both the cities which were established especially for the reason to be tourist attractions (for example Las Vegas) as well as to the ones which were 'discovered' as tourist attractions due to their rich history, monuments and historical sites or architecture (for example Budapest). By default, cities are also tourist destinations for those who travel for business. They attract visitors

who are interested in shopping, night life, taking part in festivals and cultural events as well as pilgrims and many others who have different reasons for travelling.

The increase of the number of tourists creates great opportunities for cities – it may be a crucial source of income and it may have a long-term influence on the city's image. It is a 'soft power' tool which helps build strong identity. However, mass tourism also poses threats. Its negative consequences may be deadly – their dark symbols are the decreasing availability of municipal services and the abandoned house districts, which are taken over by the tourism industry and are becoming more and more common in popular destinations. Moreover, the rise in the number of tourists means heavier traffic, more expensive flats and overtaking the area for the purpose of turning it into visitor attractions. Besides, there is also the issue of noise, chaos, mess and often the rise in criminal activity. It is very easy to focus so much on satisfying the needs of the tourists that you lose sight of the needs of the hosts – the inhabitants who, as a consequence, have to live in the surrounding that is changing and turning into a tourist 'theatre'.

When it comes to the historical Central European cities like Poznań, which have the population of about 500,000, talking about 'too many tourists' may seem slightly exaggerated. In fact, hotels in Poznań accommodate about 1,5 million people per year. By way of comparison, hotels in Prague accommodate some 8 million people, whereas those in the unbeatable Paris – about 24 million. This number does not include the people who rent flats via the Internet or stay at their friends' houses. Even if we take into account the difference in the scale, if you look at these numbers, it is hard to resist the impression that we are still a long way away from the excess. In Poland, which is located slightly on the outskirts of the highly developed Western World, we want to and we are striving to present all that is most precious and most beautiful in our country, while trying to earn money from the good products offered at affordable prices.

Already at this stage, it is good to reflect on the strategies which would allow us to prevent the negative tendencies which might occur in the future.

In many European cities, on the outskirts of the most glamorous city centres, one can find old, charming, yet slightly forgotten

districts and residential areas. Often enough they have a similar history – they used to be either industrial or residential areas for workers. Sometimes, they are old suburbs which were swallowed by cities, or settlements which had been developing alongside cities and then grew into one entity with their bigger neighbours. Often some incredible remains of the past have survived till this day in such districts: for instance the historic city layouts and architecture as well as some traces of the old social structure and elements of the intangible heritage. All of them constitute what we intuitively understand as the atmosphere or the spirit of the place. These places attract us and tempt us with their uniqueness and authenticity (which is sometimes understood in different ways). At the same time, however, they are also at great risk: they may lose their greatest asset in the process of being rearranged for the purpose of tourism.

This threat has already been noticed. In 2017 a new tourism strategy was announced for Copenhagen. Its authors bravely declared 'the end of tourism (as we know it)' and announced the new beginning – 'localhood for everyone'. It is a well-thought direction: from the imperative for satisfying all the needs of the mass tourism to the peacefulness of slow tourism.

Following this, TRAKT Cultural Tourism Centre has begun a project called Fest Fyrtel which focuses on the identity of the Poznań districts of Wilda, Łazarz and Jeżyce. We have met with the inhabitants and enthusiasts in all three districts in order to find out what are the most important issues for them and for their districts. The key ideas motivating us in this project were: to show respect for the locality and the character of the places as well as to attempt to cooperate closely with the local inhabitants whom we understood as the hosts. As a result, three 'maps' were created, which present the most interesting places, themes and tales of the districts of Jeżyce, Wilda and Łazarz. Moreover, we set up an Internet website www.festfyrtel.pl and published a book *Fest Fyrtel. Manual*, in which we explain our vision of how to work on local subjects.

We are planning to continue our work on Fest Fyrtel. Together with the inhabitants, we are going to try to present all that is most interesting in the central districts of Poznań, however in a way that will not put at risk that which is most important in them.

A photograph of a weathered wall with a map and a list of locations. The wall is covered in peeling paint and has a large white map of Poland drawn on it. The map shows the outline of Poland with internal borders. A red dot is marked on the map, corresponding to the location 'RAAR 2 Wierzbice 37' in the list. To the left of the list, there are four colored circles: a red one with a white bullseye, a green one, a red one, and a green one. The list of locations is written in black paint. The background of the wall is a mix of brown and tan colors. There are some wires and a brick wall visible at the bottom left.

tu jesteś / You are here
RAAR 1 Wierzbice 13
RAAR 2 Wierzbice 37
RAAR 3 Górna Włda 100
RAAR 4 Górna Włda 94

Mural at the corner of Górna Wilda Street and Wierzbicice Street,
photo: Ł. Gdąk TRAKT CTC



The power of the elements

Dominik
Robakowski
TRAKT CTC

Fire, water, earth, air – their joined forces created the Cathedral Island. Over the years, the inhabitants of Poznań have developed a unique relationship with the elements. The Cathedral Island abounds in places where the fate of the human beings has intertwined with the fate of nature.

FIRE

Let's begin with fire. Without fire, the Cathedral Island would be a much less pleasant place to live. It was fire that made it possible for people to keep their houses warm and prepare hot meals. Its incredible properties allowed people such as blacksmiths, potters and brick makers to do their job. People felt respect for fire, which is why it was often used in religious symbolism. Small round holes in the eastern wall of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary on the Cathedral Island are remnants of these religious practices. They were made when people lighted fires using special augers during the celebration of the Holy Saturday.

The settlement's wooden architecture as well as the fact that initially furnaces remained open contributed to numerous fires. However, one of the most fierce fires took place centuries later when the magnificent structure of the Cathedral was burning. This happened for example in 1622 when fire burnt the Cathedral's roof



Julius von Minutoli, (1804-1860), Views of Poznań, source: polona.pl

AIR

and the interior. In 1722 the main altar as well as the steles and the church organ burnt down, whereas the bells melted. The last fire took place in 1945.

Another Cathedral Island's building that is connected to fire is the Cathedral Lock, which used to house the fire brigade during the Second World War.

Although at first it seems that we could disregard the air, it should be noted that it did play a part in the history of the Cathedral Island. However, over the centuries this history was rather dark. Let's recall for example the gale-force wind which particularly threatened the Cathedral in Poznań. For instance, in 1725 high wind ripped off the Cathedral's roof. Cathedral towers were also destroyed.

However, what was feared more on the Cathedral Island than the wind was.... pestilent air. People knew nothing of the bacteria and viruses invisible to the naked eye. According to medieval knowledge, it was the air that should be blamed for the spread of diseases. At the time when Bishop Jan Lubrański introduced the Renaissance and humanism in Poznań, which were a breath of fresh air, the city struggled with one of the greatest catastrophes in its history. In the first fifty years of the 16th century, the city faced 18 outbreaks of the Black Death. The most serious, which took place in 1514, killed 10,000 people. This means that every second inhabitant of the city died. A similar tragedy was caused by the cholera epidemic in 1708-1709. During this outbreak 9,000 people died, which constituted three-quarters of the population! The disease reached also the Cathedral Island and the surrounding areas, which is proven by the burials discovered recently in the nearby district of Śródka. Fortunately, today we can breathe deeply.

EARTH

Time to come back down to the earth! When the building of the Poznań settlement commenced at the end of the 9th century, the Cathedral Island was a swampy meadow full of larger and smaller ponds. The development of the settlement required raising the ground level. In order to build the Cathedral, special wooden structures filled with sand and rocks had to be built and the ground for the ramparts surrounding the settlement was strengthened with fascine. It took the inhabitants about 300 years to 'tame' the earth. During this time, the level of the ground was raised from 3 to 5 metres, depending on the place! This required considerable effort.

The earth is also known for hiding incredible treasures. One of them is clay without which it is hard to imagine the history of the Cathedral Island. The material for brick making was acquired at the Cathedral Charter's hill. Such was the scope of the project that eventually the hill completely disappeared. Only the name Zagórze, which is used to describe the southern part of the Island, was left of it.

It should be borne in mind that the earth on the Cathedral Island is the confidant, keeping many secrets. It is in the ground that many archaeological findings are hidden and protected.

WATER

Finally, let's immerse ourselves in water. Its connection to the Cathedral Island is probably the most obvious one. The rivers flowing in the area were one of the reasons why people decided to settle on the Island. First of all, they guaranteed safety, providing an additional barrier that potential enemies would have to cross. Moreover, the river was the source of drinking water and a travelling route for merchants. Besides, the Warta and the Cybina Rivers can be called the godmothers of the Poles – after all, it was the water from these rivers that was used during the first baptisms in Mieszko's lands.

However, cooperation between people and the river was not always smooth. On average every ten years a bigger or smaller flood would hit the city. For example, in 1253 water destroyed part of the settlement's ramparts, which may have convinced Duke Przemysław I to reach his decision to move the city to the left bank of the Warta River sooner. In 1551, 1578, 1581, 1698 and 1736 the water level was so high that it reached the Cathedral. The memory of the floods in Poznań is kept on a column in the House of Psalm Singer on the Cathedral Island where the water level is marked.

In the 19th century, Prussian authorities decided to include the Warta and the Cybina Rivers in the design of a polygonal fortress. Hence, weirs were built on both rivers. They were equipped with a mechanism allowing people to stop water from flowing and direct it to the inundation areas in order to cut the city off from potential attack. However, this solution was never used in battle. Moreover, it was a real nuisance for the city. During the spring thaw, the weirs stopped ice floe, causing major and minor floods in the city.

Over the centuries people tried to tame and use the elements. Poznań's experiences, however, show that, in the end, the forces of nature have won. It is probably high time for the relationship between human beings and the elements to be based on respect. So let's all be brave enough to go through fire and water, move heaven and earth to protect the natural environment and then we will feel as light as air.



Visit the
Royal-Imperial Route
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and brochures in English!

More information:
www.trakt.poznan.pl/en/



POZnań*





The design of the reconstructed Cathedral by Franciszek Morawski, 1984, photo: R. S. Ulatowski,
source: the collection of the General Monument and Sites Conservation in Poznań

(Re)constructed Cathedral

Maksym
Kempiński
TRAKT CTC

The fact that the reconstruction of many historical buildings and monuments in Poland after 1945 was both the result of great intellectual work and debate between experts as well as a source of controversy among conservators is not widely known. The scale of war damage at that time required an unconventional approach to the reconstruction of historical buildings. The first post-war General Monuments and Sites Conservator, professor Jan Zachwatowicz, who created the design of the international logo of the protected historical monuments and sites, is known as the author of the project of rebuilding Warsaw's historical city centre. He also had a direct influence on the reconstruction plans of the historical parts of many cities in Poland, including Poznań. Zachwatowicz emphasised the fact that monuments and historical sites "(...) need to be given form that is as close to their original form as possible", which most often was tantamount to ignoring the way buildings looked like right before the war and trying to bring them back to the architectural design of the First Polish Republic. He admitted that "(...) in the refine art of conservation [this may be] a step back (...) but it is the only possible approach in our case".

An interesting example presenting these trends in Poznań, apart from the reconstruction of the Old Market Square, is the Cathedral. Although the Church was partly destroyed in an artillery attack, it could not be described as a completely ruined building. Thus, the issue of what to do with it was something to focus on. At the initiative of Primate August Hlond and professor Zachwatowicz, a special conference was called to which experts and representatives of state authorities were invited. Due to the discovery of the original Gothic walls and structural elements (made during the work to secure the building) a decision was made to rebuild the Cathedral in the Gothic style. There were, however, also other

suggestions, including quite peculiar ones such as to demolish the whole building altogether and build a new one.

Thanks to the great effort in terms of organisation and raising money, the consecration ceremony of the reconstructed Cathedral took place on the 29th of June 1956. Some decisions, however, arouse controversy up to this day. For example, open interiors of the eastern towers which were deprived of the upper chapels, the approach to the reconstruction of the dome and its height, and the decision to take down the 18th-century altar. For a long time, the choice of the right steeples was a thorny issue. Franciszek Morawski created the design of the graceful Gothic steeples, which was endorsed by the local Advisory Board chaired by Archbishop Walenty Dymek. After long resistance, under the pressure of the General Conservation Office in Warsaw, the idea to build Baroque steeples was accepted (due to the fear of delay). This example demonstrates, however, that a solution which today seems so obvious, was not so several years ago. Thus, it is not hard to imagine that the contemporary design of the Poznań Cathedral could have been quite different.

**The exhibition *(Re)constructed City*
will be held at Porta Posnania in autumn
(the exhibition will be translated
into English). Free entry.**

- 1 J. Zachwatowicz, "Program i zasady konserwacji zabytków"
in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki i Kultury*, 1946, V. 8, Issue 1/2 p. 52.

Deeiphering the past. Programming the future.

Enigma Cipher Center

Bartosz
Matolepszy
TRAKT CTC

A battlefield. A machine against a machine. Hidden behind them are brilliant mathematical minds of their inventors. It sounds futuristic but it has already happened. I am talking about the Second World War and the breaking of the Enigma Code with the use of a cyclometer, a bomb and sheets. These were the technological devices used by Polish cryptologists to beat the German coding machine. These inventions became the foundation for today's digital world, which is something we are rarely aware of. The Cipher Center, which is going to open in Poznań, is going to talk about these events as well as about their influence on us and our contemporary world. After all, the mathematical struggle with the Enigma, which had a considerable impact on the fate of the mankind, began in our city.

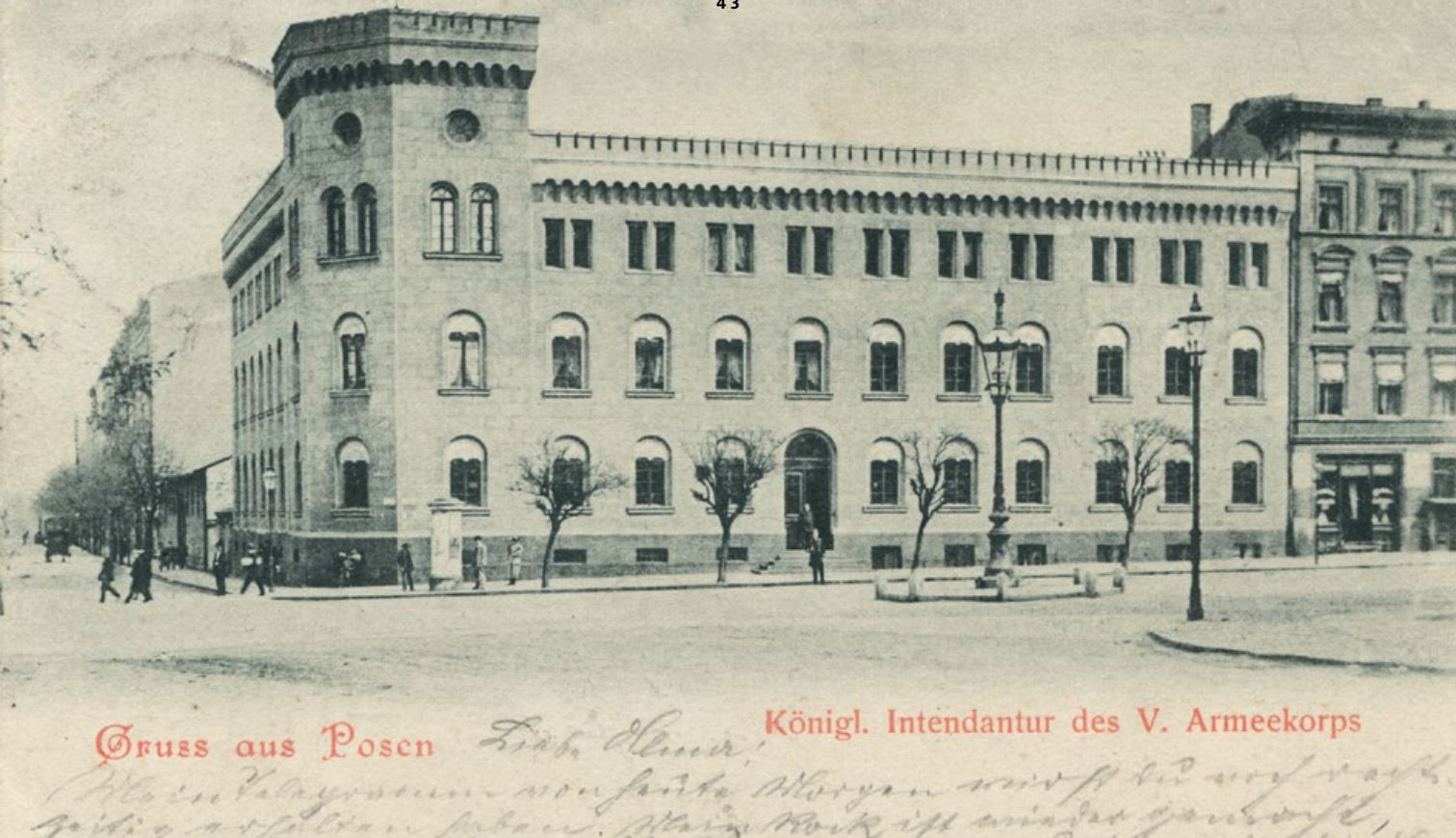
YOUNG GENIUSES

Excellent command of the German language, analytical skills and mathematical mind. These were the abilities required from the participants of the secret course in cryptology which was organised in 1929 in Poznań by the Main Staff of the Polish Armed Forces. Among the participants were students of the University of Poznań: Marian Rejewski (24 y.o.), Jerzy Różycki (20 y.o.) and Henryk Zygalski (21 y.o.). The course was a response to the actions of the Nazis who coded all their messages. The aim of the course was to try to break the code of the machine used to create it. While the future Allied forces were helpless due to the number of possible

Enigma's settings, Polish cryptologists achieved the impossible and managed to figure out the way Enigma worked in 1932. We can learn an important lesson from this story: we can achieve more if we work together. Cooperation played an important part in breaking the Enigma Code.

CHALLENGE FOR THE MIND

Youth follows its own set of rules. Enthusiasm, courage, curiosity and an open mind inspire one to take risky challenges. This theme will be used at the Cipher Center's exhibition. The exhibition is going to adopt this perspective to present the story of the young Polish cryptologists and their groundbreaking inventions which helped break the Enigma Code. This incredible story, however, is not going to be the only thing the exhibition is going to focus on. The visitors will also have an opportunity to take part in a course on coding and deciphering which will be based on the incredibly interesting methods used from the times of the ancient Egypt up to the 20th century. Everyone will have a chance to take part in an intellectual and engaging game, and try their hand at puzzles and riddles at various levels of difficulty. Besides, the Center will have its own library with a collection of digital sources and books on the young geniuses for all the fans of the Polish cryptologists, their life and activity. Thus, the Cipher Center will be the only tourist attraction of this kind in Poland.



PAST AND FUTURE

Even the most ancient history, the people who make it and the fruits of their work have impact on contemporary world. The work of the Polish cryptologists proves this well. Their experiences connected to breaking the Enigma Code were used in the work on the construction of the first prototypes of electronic computers. In other words, their discoveries provided the foundation for the digital world in which we live today. This will be the main theme of the educational projects at the Cipher Center. Following the interests of contemporary audiences when it comes to science and technology, we are going to design a programme of events encouraging creative thinking and inspiring people to take action cultivating their talents and passions.

Enigma Cipher Center will open in 2021 in the building of the old Collegium Historicum, which was built after the Second World War. It is located in the place of the old Prussian army supply reserve where in 1929 the course in cryptology was organised.

The building of the Royal Supply Reserve,
 source: University Library in Poznań

Their voice

interview
with the
representatives
of the Youth
Climate Protest

Young people's voice of opposition towards the future awaiting them on the Earth is becoming louder and more powerful. Yet, it often meets with dismissive comments from adults. We diminish the value of their actions and activism, accusing them of merely following fashion or being mercenary. Is it not the case that in the times of easy and unlimited access to scientific research on the future of our planet, it is us who behave in a childish and irresponsible way?

In recent months, Porta Posnania's Department of Education has been involved in a vocational training project with young people. This cooperation, apart from helping us do a good job, made us realise that young people know what they want and they can talk about it in a conciliatory and intelligent way. Therefore, I am pleased to say that now it is their time to talk about the climate. The floor is theirs.

Anna Mieszkała, TRAKT CTC: Who is involved in the Youth Climate Protest (YCP; Polish: Młodzieżowy Strajk Klimatyczny) in Poznań?

Poznań YCP: We are a group of students from Poznań schools; there are also some university students among us. It is difficult to describe us, as every member is unique in their own way. We are different, we have different passions and opinions. There are artists, humanists, people interested in science and animal lovers among us. What we have in common is the fact that we care about our planet and its climate. We started as a small group of several people who were disturbed by climate change and the authorities' inaction. We found each other via Facebook and we met two times. This is how the first protest, which gathered hundreds of students from Poznań schools, was organised. Since then more and more people have wanted to join us. Currently, YCP comprises about 40 members. It should be noted, however, that we are part of the Polish Youth Climate Protest as well as of the international

movement Fridays for Future which gathers young people from all over the world. We are a grassroots movement, which means that we are independent, we organise the strikes ourselves and make all decisions ourselves. Besides, we are all equal.

Climate neutrality – this is your aim. How can you, as young people, have influence on achieving it?

Climate neutrality is a situation in which people emit only as much greenhouse gases as nature is able to absorb. Currently we are struggling with climate crisis, as our emission is much too high, which contributes to the continuous acceleration of the global warming. It is a global problem, for which everyone of us is responsible. Naturally, some countries contribute more to the global warming than others. However, the problem is caused by all of us. That is why we overcome our differences. We do not put the blame on other nations, the United States or China. We are working together with our peers from various countries committed to one cause. What we are going to do today will have impact on us all in several or several dozen years. We, as young people, can draw attention to this issue. Before we started, the issue rarely appeared in the media or public debate. The fact that today it is so popular is our little success and the first sign that, after all, people do care. It gives us hope that it can work. Naturally, we do not stop at that. We want to make adults, decision-makers and Polish government take action which would guarantee us safe future. We are also working on raising awareness among our peers – after all, we are to replace the people in power in a few years.

You are very busy – tell us what you do locally.

In Poznań we are trying to popularise knowledge on the climate crisis among both young people and adults. We organise various events, workshops and lectures, we participate in panel discussions

and in the sessions of the City Council in order to be able to have influence on the local climate policy. Our representatives meet with other YCP branches. We support initiatives that pursue the same aims. We believe that such cooperation is key to achieving them. The biggest events we organise – as the name suggests – are the so-called Climate Protests. Every now and then young people around the world decide on a date when they walk out of their schools. In Poznań we can already pride ourselves on a good turnout which is way above one thousand people. We all take to the streets of our city, showing that we disagree with the passive approach of the authorities on the issue of climate change and we demand some action. Unfortunately, taking part in the protests means that we have to give up our right to study. That is why this is probably the most effective way in which young people can attract attention. We do not skip school because we want to but because we feel that it is our duty.

How does the fact that you are coming of age influence you, given the fact that your future is marked by the climate crisis and all the threats resulting from it?

Many of us are simply worried about their future. There are various predictions as to what the future may hold if we do not stop global warming. Some of them talk about wars, famine, mass migration from areas that will become uninhabitable. All this does not make us feel optimistic about the future. The fear about the progressive disastrous climate change is more and more often accompanied by the phenomenon of climate anxiety and depression. We are very busy, which often means that we have to make some sacrifices. Unfortunately, we do not see the results of our work. It is not a matter of us not being visible but of the fact that the issue is still being marginalised and ignored, and sometimes even mocked. Every minute we hear yet another news about something terrible happening somewhere in the world – fierce fires, floods, melting glaciers and animal species dying out. It touches us deeply. Climate crisis makes us lose faith and think: what is the point of some of our actions? We are at an age when we should focus on gaining knowledge and choosing career path

in order to have a good life in the future. But is there any point in studying if the authorities refuse to listen to the scientists?

Can a cultural institution like ours support you in any way? Do you see any possibility for cooperation?

Of course. We often use phrases like ‘on a dead planet there is no...’. On a dead planet there is no culture. We would love to use any help in popularising the issue or in reaching the people we have not reached yet. Adults are always the most challenging group for us because they already have an opinion on climate and it is extremely difficult to change it. Even though it is often completely outdated.



We are still gaining new members and soon we will not have enough room to meet. We usually use space provided by the institutions which support our cause when we organise our meetings. Soon we may need some bigger place to meet and come up with new initiatives so this is how you could help us. We could also cooperate in organising events.

How to reach you? Who can join you?

We have our own Facebook page – Młodzieżowy Strajk Klimatyczny – Poznań as well as our own account on Instagram – @msk.poznan. Everyone can write to us and we will surely write back. Every young person caring about the issue of the climate crisis can join us. However, interestingly enough, there are people among us who used to disbelieve climate change, whereas now they are one of our most active members. Thus, everyone who wants to know more about the climate can contact us and maybe he or she will want to do something with us. We would like to invite also adults to follow the subject and take part in our events. Take your mum, grandma, sister and dog with you. Everyone and every voice fighting for the just cause matters.

YCP is a no face movement without one leader or face. What matters most is working together, which is why they all sign under this interview.



Heritage For The Climate

#HeritageForTheClimate is our motto for 2020.

We want to educate about heritage and climate change so that introducing bigger and smaller changes, which will help protect the environment, becomes easier. This, however, cannot be just empty words, which is why from this year on we are striving to introduce changes also in our policy to take care of our heritage and our planet together!



POZnań*

Manifesto

Robert
Rient

Just like a tree is born out of the ground, cultural heritage is born out of natural heritage. One is connected to the other, like oxygen is connected to the air, the air to breath, and breath to life. In other words, culture does not exist without nature, just like the human being is inextricably connected to water, plants, the air and the ground. Their relationship is interdependent. In terms of the current climate crisis, our motto *Heritage for the climate* refers to the necessary and morally indispensable priority which defines the direction in which every cultural institution's action should go. The word 'heritage' refers to cultural and natural values. Caring about nature is tantamount to caring about all other resources. Especially when their future is uncertain, to say the least. The list of endangered species comprises millions of plants and animals, including the human being.

Awareness of the climate crisis obliges us to engage in deep reflection on individual choices and actions taken by a cultural institution. Fostering the anthropocentric illusion which allows us to create more and more cultural products without making sure whether or not they take into account our (impossible to reject) reliance on nature is both short-sighted and immoral.

In 2020 TRAKT Cultural Tourism Centre is taking action focused on the broadly defined climate protection. Lectures, workshops, performances, outdoor activities, exhibitions and other events will, first and foremost, touch the issue of ecology – heritage for the climate. Ecological crisis is an opportunity for us to wake up from the illusion and our egoistic desire to possess and consume. Awareness of the feebleness of the endangered heritage and respect for it no longer allow us to take action focusing on enhancing our own image and deriving pleasure instead of providing benefit for the Earth and all its inhabitants.

Robert Rient – a journalist and writer born in Szklarska Poręba; author of the reportage titled *Witness* published also in the US, as well of the novels *Duchy Jeremiego* (Jeremy's demons) and *Przebłysk. Dookoła świata – dookoła siebie* (Flash. Around the world – around oneself). He cooperates with the magazines *Sens* and *Przekrój* – in the latter, he is the author of the cycles titled *Istoty rzadziej spotykane* (Rarely encountered creatures), *Ludzie listy piszą* (People write letters) and the latest one titled *Wizje roślin* (Vision of plants).

Vegetables in the Old — Polish cuisine

Dawid
Barbarzak
TRAKT CTC

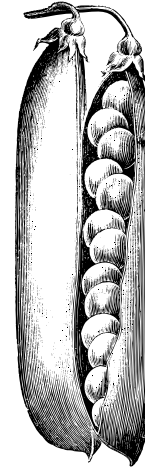
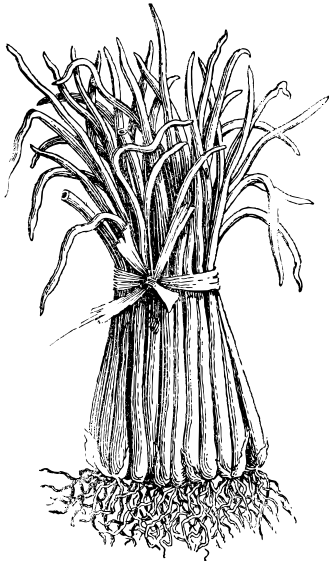
Meat, especially poultry and pork, is a frequent guest on Polish table. In recent years, the consumption of meat per year has been estimated at the average level of 80 kilograms per person. This number tends to get bigger. Although we are not the leaders when it comes to eating meat, in Italy for example this number is about 48 kilograms¹. Nevertheless, the number of people who are looking for a healthy diet and who more and more often choose vegetables instead of meat is growing. As it should, because according to the World Health Organisation, reducing meat (especially red and processed meat) helps us avoid arteriosclerosis, obesity and cancer. It also reduces carbon dioxide emission, the number of forests which are cut down and turned into grazing lands and slows down the process of climate warming. Have Poles been the nation of meat eaters for centuries and is vegan cuisine just a new diet trend? Have vegetables been marginalised until now? What should be our attitude towards our ancestors' heritage?



According to Gall Anonim, Piast and Rzepicha would once hold a feast for some travellers, during which they served a piglet and beer. Gall also describes sumptuous feasts held by Bolesław the Brave. However, the image presenting medieval and noble gluttony should be considered an exaggerated stereotype. Although for centuries the affluence of food was the symbol of power, people

did not eat meat every day. Human population was smaller back then, however the methods of cattle-breeding were less efficient. At the times of the first members of the Piast dynasty a diet usually included also local vegetables such as turnip, cabbage, beetroot, carrot and cucumber as well as leguminous plants including pea, broad bean and lentil. Groats were also popular. It was the most popular food of the poor. Archaeological discoveries, such as the discovery of the remains of grains and vegetables which are on display at the Museum of the Beginnings of Poland in Gniezno, prove that. Besides, peasants, townspeople and noblemen were all limited by two things: religious constraints and the fact that some products were only seasonal.

Christianity introduced the custom of fasting. According to Thietmar's Chronicle, princess Dobrawa allegedly had to be cunning to convince Mieszko to abstain from eating meat during Lent. Bolesław the Brave, on the other hand, would knock people's teeth out for failing to fast. Lent, during which also butter and milk were to be avoided, was observed for over half of the days in a year. Therefore, it must have contributed to the rise in the consumption of fish and vegetables. Monasteries set up their own vineyards and vegetable gardens, which were used, but only during the season².



In 1400 the burgrave of Poznań, Przecław Słota, wrote in his poem *On behaving at the table* that the participants of some feast were served:

*... beer and water,
And meat and bread,
And many other needs
Are catered for
According to what one can receive.*

The amount and diversity of food depended on the season of the year. The summer brought grains and leguminous plants, autumn – fruit and vegetables. In winter people would make pickled cabbage and slaughter cattle to smoke and dry the meat.

Today globalisation allows us to pick and choose the food we want. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that fruit and vegetables bought out of the season are often picked long before they are ripe. They also have to be properly 'protected' when they are transported. Sometimes it is better to wait for our local food. Not necessarily due to some patriotic feelings but in order to protect our health and... our wallets.

Vegetables were gaining in popularity in Italy. The huge density of the population on the peninsula heightened the need to search for alternative types of food, whereas heat made people choose light meals. Bartolomeo Platina, who was the author of the first printed cookbook titled *De honesta voluptate et valetudine* (On honest indulgence and good health, 1475), lists the benefits of herbs and vegetables such as leek, capers, endive, chicory, purslane, mallow, hollyhock and borage. Since the publication of *DziKHI BIT* coincides with the commencement of the asparagus season, you can find Platina's recipe for asparagus at the end of the article. You can try for yourself whether you like it or not. Perhaps you will say, like one of the Polish travellers, that they "would be more tasty with cream and butter rather than vinegar and olive oil"³. One of Platina's friends, a humanist Filippo Buonaccorsi, spent a huge part of his life in Poland. He lived in Cracow but he also owned a tenement house in Poznań (at 51 Stary Rynek). However, whether he smuggled some of the recipes from his friend's bestseller into the Polish cuisine is unknown.

It is said that the person who contributed to the popularity of vegetables at the Polish court was Queen Bona. During her wedding reception 29 dishes were served. Almost all included meat, however. The salads served at the beginning were only supposed to increase appetite. If there were any citrus fruits, they were served with partridge, whereas quince was only served as aspic. Sigismund's wife, Bona, who had only just arrived in Poland, was accompanied on her journey to the Wawel Castle in 1518 by our very own bishop of Poznań – Jan Lubrański. Although Bona had Italian servants in Poland, she cannot be credited for introducing the so-called 'włoszczyzna' (literally: Italian vegetables) in our country. Over one hundred years before Bona, Jadwiga of Poland, who did not like greasy food, would already opt for fruit and vegetables such as cauliflower, carrot, leek and lettuce. The latter was the object of ridicule to Polish students in Italy for a long time. It was feared that if they eat grass in the summer, they would be served hay in winter. Wacław Potocki wrote that he left Italy hungry and instead of eating "spinach with celery [and] asparagus with artichoke" he would rather have eaten at an inn "a cabbage stew"⁴. Fortunately, Lubrański and other guests of *Bolonia Grassa* (called that way due to the greasy food served at the court) were definitely not forced to eat only greens.

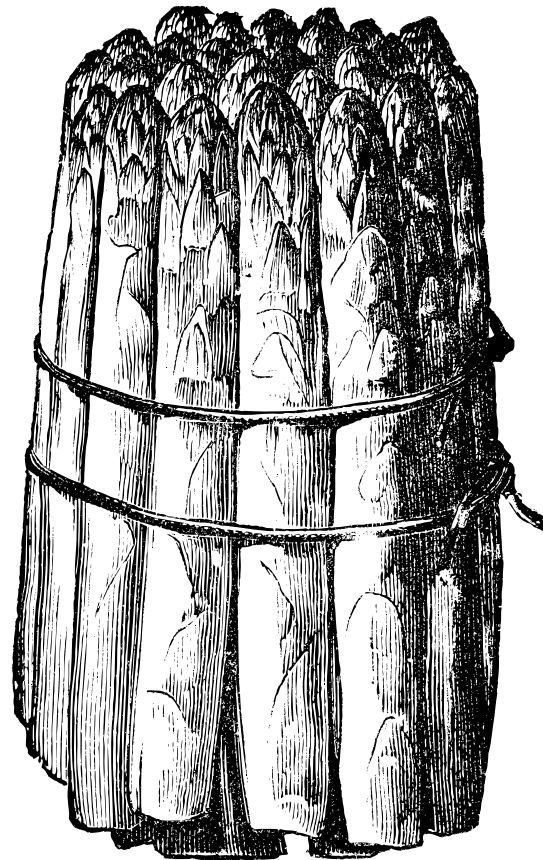
In the 17th century Europe welcomed a new fashion for French cuisine, which rejected spice and favoured the natural taste of the fruits of the field and garden. It was the time of broth, brew and herbs. *Le jardinier françois*, a cookbook combining recipes and information on gardens, enjoyed great popularity. Meat was still held dear, however vegetables were finally appreciated and their value, which had been denied for a long time, was finally noticed. It was not Queen Bona's court, therefore, but Mary Louise Gonzaga's which started the culinary revolution in Poland one hundred years later. The first Polish cookbook titled *Compendiumferculorum* written by Stanisław Czerniecki (1682) comprised recipes for meat, fish as well as vegetables: "broccoli, artichoke, asparagus, various kinds of lettuce and spinach." We could add to this list also tubers for example... topinambour⁵. This seemingly modern hipster dainty was known to Polish 'Sarmatians' long before potatoes, which during the Enlightenment were considered ornamental plants. Wielkopolska became famous for their potatoes only in the 19th century, largely thanks to the German settlers. Eventually, potato superseded other root vegetables including turnip and parsnip, and became the most basic food in the diet.

Italian cuisine was welcomed back in the last decade, however in a completely new form. The tomato sauce, which is an inseparable companion to pizza and pasta, is a late invention. The first printed recipe for the sauce was published in 1692!⁶ Before that, *pomo d'oro*, which came from the New World, was as mysterious to the Italians as the golden apples guarded by the Hesperides, which in fact are what the sauce derived its name from. Since 2010 the Mediterranean cuisine has been included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List. We live in a country which is part of the Mediterranean civilisation and we can benefit from its culinary heritage – especially vegetables. Those which have always been here as well as those which have come to us relatively recently.

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- 1 According to GUS (2018) and the paper titled *Consumo reale di carne e di pesce in Italia*, Milano 2017.
 - 2 *Czy Polska leży nad Morzem Śródziemnym*, eds. R. Kusek, J. Sanetra-Szeliga, Cracow 2012, pp. 387 – 419.
 - 3 M. Kowalczyk, *Obraz Włoch w polskim piśmiennictwie geograficznym i podróżniczym XVIII wieku*, Wrocław 2005, p. 147.
 - 4 H. Barycz, *Spojrzenia w przeszłość polsko-włoską*, Wrocław 1975, p. 73.
 - 5 J. Dumanowski, M. Kasprzyk-Chevriaux, *Kapłony i szczeżuje. Opowieść o zapomnianej kuchni*, Wołowiec 2018, pp. 122 – 133.
 - 6 D. DeWitt, *Kuchnia Leonarda da Vinci. Sekretna historia kuchni włoskiej (Da Vinci's Kitchen: A Secret History of Italian Cuisine)*, Poznań 2007, p. 203.

Renaissance recipe for asparagus

Put cooked asparagus on a plate, add salt, olive oil and wine vinegar. Some people sprinkle them with aromatic spices. Asparagus eaten as an appetizer help for flatulence, improve vision, tenderly soften the intestines; they are also good for the chest and back pain as well as for intestinal afflictions. (...) Eaten in excess, they may be detrimental to your health because they are highly diuretic and may cause bladder pain. If you grind the asparagus root and drink it with white wine, it will help you remove gallstones. Some people believe that their fruit mixed with wine is an antidote for poison.



Bartolomeo Platina, *De honesta voluptate et valetudine*, Venetiae 1498, p. 64.

Do you prefer traditional tastes?

Read *Wielkopolski kucharz* (Chef from Wielkopolska) (1876)

in which you will find recipes for cooked asparagus and an asparagus soup!

Visit **Porta Posnania** with
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**The purpose of this publication is to present
different viewpoints and juxtapose various opinions.**

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