

The University space

University infrastructure in and around Poznań (1919-2019)

Summary

The phrase “University space” used in the title refers to the various buildings, and other properties scattered around the city which together comprise its infrastructure. A university is a complicated structure and in order to function effectively, it requires many parts to work together, one of which is its infrastructure. However, it is frequently the case that articles about universities only deal with issues related to scientific research, teaching, structure and administration, and there can be no doubt that these are the most important elements of such an institution. What is less common, however, is a discussion of subjects connected with the university infrastructure, and these are often dealt with in a somewhat cursory manner. Such subjects often find themselves marginalised in works on university history, but are the main focus of this book. Its fundamental aim is to present the infrastructure of Poznań University from its founding to the present day.

First and foremost, the “university infrastructure” is the physical elements without which it could not function. Without entering into a discussion how to define both aspects of this compound term, in this work I include buildings for teaching purposes, libraries, research rooms and laboratories, as these constitute the base for the university’s teaching and research infrastructure. Different faculties also have additional elements in their infrastructure: clinics for medical faculties, farms and forestry research areas for agriculture and forestry faculties, and sports halls and other sports buildings for faculties of physical education. Finally, the teaching and research infrastructure includes residential creative work centres and conference facilities. We cannot overlook accommodation for university employees, tenement houses, student dormitories, canteens and health centres. This group of buildings also includes university holiday accommodation located away from its main buildings. All of the above make up the university’s social and residential structure.

This book does not go into the furnishing of university buildings, nor their users. These are only mentioned in cases where such information is required in order to explain the processes being described. It is worth noting, however, that the university buildings and their furnishings were subject to change, of which their users were well aware. Therefore the book does not deal with the history of these buildings before they were taken over by Poznań University, nor after they were sold or their ownership changed. Saying that a particular building was a Poznań University building was very often the result of it being accorded a specific

function. It was only in the 1920s that buildings were erected to meet the University's needs. Before that, the majority of buildings were adapted for educational purposes.

The properties described in this book were and still make up an enormous collection of several hundred buildings, which Poznań University has accumulated during its 100-year history. These were built, acquired, pledged, remodelled, rebuilt, renovated, sold, and above all, used and managed by huge numbers of academics, administrative staff, their families and students.

It is clear that the aforementioned parts of the university, which are essential for it to function, are of a material character – they are buildings that function in the urban space. They therefore enter into relations with each other and their locations, influencing and shaping them. For this author, the focus is not only on issues related to architecture and construction, but also to urban planning, which have a crucial impact on how the city organism functions, the buildings within it and its inhabitants and users.

The university infrastructure, which is understood as the buildings essential for it to function, potentially has huge social impact on those working and studying within it, as well as the local inhabitants not associated with the university. In using the municipal space in which some buildings carry the university crest, Poznanians come into contact with this institution. On the other hand, when moving from building to building, the university's students and employees also make use of urban space. Taken together, all these activities create a network of meanings, the "University space".

Buildings functioning in urban space are a sign of the constant exchange of ideas between a university and its surroundings. Freedom of thought, the freedom to conduct scientific research and the unhindered pursuit of intellectual challenges are all ideas that become reality in university buildings, and subsequently filter out from them into the urban space during public debates, exhibitions, conferences etc. This process takes the form of a dialogue, which means that Poznań's university has been an active participant in public life since it was founded.

In this work, the university infrastructure is presented first and foremost from the historical perspective. November 1918 is taken as the starting date for this history, which is when the first plans were made to open a university in Poznań. The events are presented right up to 2019, which marks 100 years of a university in the city. The main aim of this work is to chronicle the history of how the University's property was amassed, constructed and used. Readers will discover the plans and design projects that the University authorities succeeded in implementing, as well as those that, for whatever reason, were not completed. These are still worth presenting, as they are testament to the power and momentum of ideas considered at various stages of the University's development.

When Poznań University first came into being, its infrastructure was taken from institutions existing previously in Poznań – the Prussian Royal Academy (Königliche Akademie), the Royal Residence (Königliches Residenzschloss), the Prussian Settlement Commission (Königliche Ansiedlungskommission) and the Kaiser-Wilhelm Library. Of these institutions only the latter can be said to have enjoyed indisputable continuity. The Prussian provincial library became the University Library, taking over both its building and collection. Prior to the Royal Academy being taken over, a formal act of closing the Prussian school of higher education was arranged, hence it is not possible to speak of any continuity. However, in the case of the Academy, there is some continuity in functions, as this building was designed for educational purposes, which it performs to this day. The remaining buildings taken over by the University in 1919 were not designed for teaching purposes, nor were they educational institutions.

On setting up the Reichsuniversität in 1941, the German occupiers made no attempt to hide their use of Polish university buildings, although their newly-propounded tradition and official propaganda strove to emphasise the lineage with the Royal Academy, thus passing over the times of the Polish university. This strategy was understandable in terms of the occupiers' policy towards the lands subsumed into the Third Reich in 1939. In turn, from its very beginnings in March 1945, the Polish university rejected the idea that the Reichsuniversität had functioned within its walls, and referred solely to the clandestine University of the Western Lands that had operated in several cities in the General gouvernement lands. Prof. Stefan Dąbrowski, the post-war rector of Poznań University, was one of the few to discern the paradox in Hitler's university functioning within the buildings of Poznań University. In one of his speeches, he showed just how important victory over the Germans was in regaining these spaces for the University.

The history of the development of Poznań University's infrastructure is chronicled in archive materials so far rarely used. Among the most significant are the Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) archives. The documents stored there constitute an enormous collection of sources, and analysing these in full would be beyond the author's possibilities. Supplementary material, particularly with regard to the inter-war period, comes from those collected in the archives at two other Poznań universities, the University of Medical Sciences and the University of Life Sciences. Additional materials were found in the State Archive in Poznań and the National Digital Archives in Warsaw. Visual material (photographs of University buildings at various times in their history) can be found in the City Historical Preservation Officer's collections in Poznań, the National Museum in Poznań, the Museum of Poznań University of Medical Sciences, the Adam Mickiewicz University archives, the Adam Mickiewicz University Promotion department, in the National Digital Archive and the Virtual Museum of the History of Poznań (CYRYL).

These materials are presented chronologically, starting from 1918, and only by using such a sequence is it possible to see the dynamics of change in particular areas of infrastructure. I have divided the history of Poznań University's buildings into four phases, and in each I discuss the teaching buildings, accommodation for students and academic teachers, and centres outside the city of Poznań. In each part I also discuss planned and incomplete investments.

The first phase covers the period up until 1939. During this time, the University authorities amassed buildings and other facilities for employees and students intensively. Efforts were made to expand existing property, although financial difficulties only allowed few ventures to be commenced.

The second phase covers the Second World War, with particular emphasis on how the German university functioned. Reichsuniversität Posen utilised the infrastructure it took over, often adapting it to meet the needs of German academics.

Wartime bombardment and the battle for Poznań resulted in the destruction of many university buildings. Their rebuilding or thorough renovation involved an immense financial and logistical effort, and the third part of this book contains a description of this process. This process ended with two new universities being separated off from Poznań University: the Medical Academy (today Poznań University of Medical Sciences) and the Higher School of Agriculture (now Poznań University of Life Sciences). These institutions of higher education took over some buildings, which were from then on no longer regarded as belonging to Poznań University's infrastructure.

The fourth period, namely from this division right up to 2019, takes in turbulent events and changing fortunes: the University's slow, gradual development up until the mid-1970s, its protracted emergence from the crisis of the decade that followed, and finally, the sudden development of the last 15 years. During this time, AMU's infrastructure has undergone two big changes: part of the University being moved outside the city centre in the early 1970s (the buildings on Szamarzewskiego street), and the construction of the campus at Morasko since the start of the 21st century.

Phase One: Construction and expansion of Poznań University until 1939

Construction of the university infrastructure commenced in 1918 after the efforts of the members of the University Commission (Heliodor Świącicki, Józef Kostrzewski, Michał Sobeski, Stanisław Kozierowski), which resulted in the founding of the Piast University in May 1919. This new seat of learning in the western territories of the Polish state was inaugurated in the former Imperial Castle of Kaiser Wilhelm II, in the newly named Collegium Maius. Completed in 1910, this building stood at the heart of the Prussian Imperial Castle Quarter, and was built both to boost the attractiveness of city as a residence for the German Kaiser and also to emphasise the Prussian presence in Wielkopolska.

These gradual changes in the function of buildings built for the Prussian rulers and civil servants were of hugely symbolic significance to those living in Poznań and the surrounding region: it became a way to express Polishness and belonging to the Polish state. The Piast University, renamed Poznań University in 1920, played an enormous role in this process. The first building integrated into the new university structure was the former Königliche Akademie, now named Collegium Minus. The second was the Castle (former Königliches Residenzschloß), and the third the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Bibliothek, whose collection was combined with that of the Polish Society for the Friends of the Sciences to form the University Library. The University also took over other Castle Quarter buildings, the Royal Colonisation Commission (former Königliche Ansiedlungskommission), renamed the Settlement Commission in 1919 and later the Land Office. It became known as the Collegium Medicum (today Collegium Maius).

Of these buildings only the former Royal Academy and, to a partial extent, the Library were designed for teaching purposes. The Castle and Collegium Medicum had more administrative or representative purposes. They also required considerable remodelling and adaptation. Often they did not fulfil the criteria of scientific workspaces, particularly those of laboratories, which needed to be of a special design. These difficulties were an everyday occurrence throughout the time of Poznań University. The usual route to acquiring new buildings was not by constructing them, but rather to take over and adapt them. Buildings became part of the university infrastructure not because they met specific architectural criteria, but because it was possible to acquire them. Their function was subject to change, they underwent adaptation to meet teaching and research needs. This practice only changed after 2000 with the construction of the Morasko campus and several university buildings in the centre of Poznań. Additional funding enabled the University authorities to commission designs and construct buildings in line with the needs of research and university teaching.

The emergence and dynamic growth of Poznań University forced its authorities and those at the municipal and voivodship level to seek out new teaching facilities. The Faculty

of Agriculture and Forestry, which was established in autumn 1919, found itself in the favourable position of being located in manor lands in Sołacz (a north-western district of Poznań), with its departments and chairs housed in specially purchased Sołacz villas. The Faculty of Medicine was in far more difficult circumstances; while its theoretical units were housed in the Collegium Medicum, its clinical units drifted between private houses and city hospitals, and only very few found their own buildings. The latter included the eye clinic, children's clinic, surgery clinic and neurology and psychiatric clinic. The purchase of expansive plots between Dolna and Górna Wilda streets with the Garczyński Foundation Works (Collegium Marcinkowskiego) and the Augusta-Wiktoria House (children's clinic) only satisfied the Faculty's requirements to a limited extent.

In view of these problems, funds were sought for the construction of new university buildings. In 1921 foundation stones were laid for four buildings, although only one was completed before 1930, the general chemistry building in Sołacz, which has the notable distinction of being the first university building constructed in independent Poland. It was possible to complete a further two, the imposing Collegium Chemicum and modern Collegium Anatomicum using funds allocated by the Polish General Exhibition held in Poznań in 1929. After the end of the exhibition, the aforementioned buildings were adapted to university purposes and brought into use in 1934. The fourth cornerstone laid in 1921 bore fruit, as it were, as late as 1937. The outbreak of WWII interrupted building work on the central building of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry in Sołacz (Collegium Cieszkowskich).

Buildings for teaching and clinic purposes are only a part of the university infrastructure. Professors and students needed somewhere to live. Assembling the teaching staff for the new university entailed special privileges, so professors in Poznań were offered flats with a minimum 5 rooms or a villa. The University bought more than a dozen town houses in various districts around Poznań which were to provide accommodation for staff or let out as flats for rent. At the turn of the 1920s/ 1930s, two houses were built for professors at Libelta street, in the very centre of Poznań.

Students, on the other hand, were beneficiaries of wealthy benefactors who bequeathed their property to the university with a view to it being used as halls of residence. This was the case with the house at ul. Słowackiego 20 and ul. Św. Marcin 40 (today no. 75) and also ul. Dąbrowskiego 5. However, these buildings only satisfied Poznań's students' accommodation needs to a limited extent. In the mid-1920s, building work began on three new halls of residence. The largest of these was the New Hall of Residence (known today as Hanka hall), which stood on Wały Leszczyńskiego street and had approximately 300 places. The Dom Medyków was built next door (later the university hospital), and in Sołacz the Dom Rolnika i Leśnika hall. These were completed in time for the Polish General Exhibition in 1929, and were subsequently allocated for use by students.

During the first twenty years of its existence, Poznań University accumulated huge property. This was due in part to the foresight of the university authorities and partly to the commitment of benefactors. This enabled the university to survive the difficult post-war years, and above all, provided a base on which to build a new university after 1951. Alongside its significant material value, the university infrastructure also had a symbolic role. This related to the main buildings located in the former Castle Quarter which had changed their function: from the 1920s on, a university campus started to take shape along the ring roads in the district that had previously housed the Prussian authorities' buildings. Other buildings

in addition to those of the University belonged to the Higher School of Trade (today Poznań University of Economics), the Ursuline Order middle school, and after the war the Higher School of Music (now Academy of Music). With time this quarter became not only a source of pride to the Poznań University, but also to the entire city.

Phase Two: The wartime fortunes of Poznań University's buildings

The outbreak of war in 1939 put a stop to Poznań University's development. Its buildings were taken over by the occupying forces' institutions. On Adolf Hitler's birthday in April 1941, the Reichsuniversität was founded in Poznań, the third such university after Strasbourg and Prague. Polish university life was suspended for several years, existing only in the clandestine University of the Western Lands. Poznań University's buildings were used by German students and academics, which provided some continuity in the university. The end of the war came gradually. First, some of Poznań's university buildings were destroyed in the bombing of 1941 and 1944. Next, the battle to liberate the city from January to February 1945 also meant considerable damage to the city infrastructure. A number of university buildings were completely demolished or burnt out, and only one was left intact to a degree that allowed the University to be installed there. The remaining buildings suffered damage to a lesser or greater extent.

Phase three: reconstruction of the university infrastructure and its division between new institutions (1945-1951)

After the end of the war, the priority for the University authorities headed by the rector, Stefan Dąbrowski, was to open the academic year for students. However, lecture rooms were required for classes to be conducted effectively. The postwar rebuilding work posed a huge challenge, which took place during a time of acute shortages. Initially, each form of investment was a heroic act, and yet it was possible to rebuild most of the University's buildings during the first five years after the war's end. This was often a makeshift process using poor-quality materials, which meant the buildings frequently needed to be renovated soon after work had been completed. Some buildings never rose again from the rubble, and the shape some took on was different to their pre-war form. Reconstruction work on some buildings was completed relatively quickly, while on others it even dragged on into the 1960s.

The need for a swift reconstruction of buildings for teaching purposes consigned to the back burner some more interesting plans to locate the university in the urban space. Unfortunately, these all required huge financial resources, which were lacking at the time. Suggested sites for university buildings included the ruined Citadel, in the military terrain along Bukowska street, and even at the trade fair or in Chwaliszewo.

The period of post-war reconstruction was also turbulent due to changes to and confiscation of the university's buildings. In 1947, decisions taken by the National Councils – Municipal and Voivodship, Poznań University lost its space in the Imperial Castle building. In exchange, it received the buildings on Matejki street (Collegium Philosophicum, and later Collegium Mathematicum) and also Kantaka street (Collegium Iuridicum). However, the greatest infrastructural rearrangement was caused decisions to found the Medical Academy out of the former Faculty of Medicine (1950), and to establish the Higher School of Agriculture out of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry (1951). Dividing the University into three entities brought with it the collapse of its infrastructure.

Phase four: University infrastructure in Poznań from 1951-2019

The slimmed-down university, known from 1955 onwards as Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (AMU) was given buildings in the centre of the city, and following initial difficulties began to expand its infrastructure relatively quickly: new chairs, units and institutes were set up. Unfortunately, this did not proceed in tandem with an expansion of its infrastructure. In the 20 years that followed, right up until 1970, only one building for teaching purposes was built – Collegium Novum – and three halls of residence – Jowita, Jagienka and Zbyszko. During this time AMU also incorporated the Teaching College and took over its three buildings on Szamarzewskiego street.

In the 1960s, plans were made for a university district on what were then the outskirts of the city at Marcelin. Spatial development plans were produced, an architectural competition was announced, a winning design selected and work began on investment. However, building the AMU Marcelin Estate ended in fiasco, not because of one particular cause, but more the result of a series of events. From 1973 a new idea was promoted – to build a Science District at Morasko, which would bring together all Poznań's universities along with the Polish Academy of Sciences' research institutes.

The construction of a great university district was cut back to building a New University. This idea emerged in 1973 and 1974, and the urban and architectural plans a year later. Construction work was to start in 1977, when the central inauguration of the academic year was held in Poznań, and the foundation stone of the new 'socialist' university was laid on a far-flung greenfield site at Morasko. The plan was for the university to come into operation from the mid-1980s. However, the years that followed merely saw preparatory work, and construction on the first building – Collegium Physicum – commenced several years later. Paradoxically, the first campus building to be completed was the telephone exchange, which was an extremely big even in terms of the technological solutions of the day. It currently houses the AMU Archive, whose new building awaits construction.

The 1980s was the toughest decade in the University's history. Its development was hampered by the lack of investment, lack of prospects for any improvement in terms of finance and buildings, and general social malaise. The landmark year 1989 brought a host of changes, also regarding infrastructure. Many state-owned enterprises, not favourably disposed to market economy rules, got into financial and organisational difficulty, which compelled them to sell their property. At this time, the University negotiated various deals and acquired several buildings in and around Poznań. However, the same procedures that allowed it to take on new buildings also forced it to give up those it had previously rented, as the free-market rents proved too high for AMU.

The early 1990s saw dynamic growth in humanities faculties and with it came the need for them to find new premises. One building AMU symbolically took over was the Voivodship Committee of the disbanded Polish United Workers' Party. From then on it housed the Faculty of History. This was a fine addition to the complex of university buildings located just a few minutes' walk from each other in the very heart of Poznań, a fact that created favourable conditions for the exchange of students and academics. At the same time, several buildings were acquired from the Hipolit Cegielski works administration, the first premises in that part of the city.

In the early 1990s, the decision was taken to forge ahead with the Morasko project. The main building of the Faculty of Physics completed at this time would not stand alone. It wo-

uld soon be joined by the Faculty of Geographical and Geological Sciences (converted from a former workers' hostel), and others: Collegium Biologicum and Collegium Mathematicum. A turning point for investment in the Morasko campus was its being permanently enshrined in the central government budget, and the subsequent passing of a bill on the development of Adam Mickiewicz University until 2004, which was later extended four times until 2019. Funding secured by the efforts of Wielkopolska's parliamentarians were allocated for the swift construction of further buildings at Morasko campus, the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Collegium Chemicum and Collegium Historicum. A swimming pool and multifunctional sports hall were also built in the northern part of the campus. The teaching and sports facilities were complemented by two research complexes, financed using European Union funding - the impressive architecture of the Wielkopolska Centre for Advanced Technologies and the Intra-university Centre for Nanobiomedicine. Other buildings planned include several research and teaching facilities plus the AMU Archive.

The Morasko campus was designed in 1975 and the main construction projects were completed in the first decade of the 21st century. With time not only the ideas of university campuses changed, but also building materials and technologies, and the vision for developing the city of Poznań. The predominant idea in the 1970s was of expanding the city into the suburbs, creating outlying districts connected with the city centre by fast tram and road routes. The first decades of the present century were dominated by ideas of the city as a central point, focusing the most important service, scientific and cultural functions, and filling gaps in the existing buildings rather than extending outwards. We now know today that academic and student life is an essential and irreplaceable element of the city organism. From this point of view, shifting the University out of the city centre is a controversial decision that is justifiably criticised.

The undeniable advantage of the Morasko campus lies in the excellent conditions it offers for research and teaching. However, campus life is hampered by the lack of social infrastructure, student accommodation and the associated service network. Yet outside teaching hours the expansive Morasko area performs a different function: it is a superb place for recreation and relaxation for inhabitants of nearby housing estates. Its sports infrastructure, meadows, forests and ponds come into their own in the late afternoon and evening, when the campus turns its focus away from academic and student life. Its relatively remote location is a definite inconvenience. The western edge of the campus, which stands close to the Poznań Fast Tram terminus, is in a better situation than the eastern reaches accessible by bus.

It is not only at the Morasko campus that recent years have seen impressive investments in the university infrastructure. Central government funding has also supported the building and extension of facilities in AMU's remote branches: Słubice, Gnieźno, Kalisz and Piła. Although the modern centres built there are not always utilised fully, there is no doubt that they serve the needs of local inhabitants regarding academic and cultural life.

Securing funding for the campus and university branches freed up finance for investments in the city center. A new library was built next to Collegium Novum. A library was also erected at the back of Collegium Maius, blending in superbly with its historic architecture. Land purchased from the army along al. Niepodległości became the site of the new Collegium Iuridicum Novum with its large, architecturally interesting auditorium. The adjacent plot is set aside for the future law library. Finally, the modern Collegium Znanieckiego was built for teaching and exhibition purposes on the Szamarzewskiego street site.

The period of the last thirty years has also been a time of dynamic accumulation and adaptation of different facilities outside the city of Poznań. These serve as residential work-, conference- and recreation centres for university staff. Three interesting examples are the palace complexes in Obrzycko, Gułtowy and Ciążeń. All are set in extensive parkland complete with rural and garden architecture.

The University's effort devoted to building new facilities at the Morasko campus and in the city centre did not mean existing buildings were left neglected. Over the last 15 years major renovation work has been carried out in almost all university buildings, in particular: those at Szamarzewskiego street, the halls of residence at Piątkowska street, the Hanka hall of residence and neighbouring building. Extensive renovation work is underway at Collegium Heliodori Świącicki (formerly Collegium Chemicum), the last of the 'old university buildings' designated for renovation, following work on Collegium Minus, Collegium Maius, Collegium Iuridicum and the University Library.

Renovation to these University edifices and to now independent parts of the nearby Imperial Castle and Castle Quarter complex has given the centre a new lease of life. Once the heart of Prussian Poznań, it has become a true university quarter, bringing together important buildings from most of the city's institutions of higher education. Its form, aesthetics and urban planning all contribute to Poznanians' sense of identifying with this urban space.

Adam Mickiewicz University's *Development strategy* provides insight into the further plans and infrastructure development, stating: "The costs of maintaining and managing a large number of properties in the city of Poznań and around the country, which is not only associated with the University's statutory activities, necessitates economic analysis and a 'road map' for optimal REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT NIERUCHOMOŚCIAMI [original upper case – MM], including the sale of some AMU properties. Each new investment and purchase should be preceded by a multifaceted analysis (including a feasibility study)". The cost of preparing, building and maintaining university investments is unquestionably immense. AMU spends millions of zloties each year just on maintaining its properties, and it may be the case that some are a burden.

In the space of one hundred years, Poznań University's infrastructure has undergone huge evolution. Having started out with three buildings in the centre of Poznań, the university now encompasses dozens more in an expansive and complicated structure spread around the city and beyond. Scientific research and classes are conducted in some, while others offer accommodation to those associated with the university. Every day Poznań comes alive with AMU's students and academic staff, important constituent parts of its complex construction, university premises burst with intellectual and cultural life that influences the city and its inhabitants. The University's channels of social influence are manifold; in addition to imparting knowledge, it creates a pleasant space in which to work, study and live, particularly in terms of how the city functions as a whole. In doing so, Adam Mickiewicz University has proved a magnificent success.

Translated by Rob Pagett