

Gdańsk,

my place with no borders

Maria Mendel,
Editor

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Dear Reader,

Here is an extraordinary publication and it is no coincidence that it bears the title *Gdańsk, Moje Miejsce bez Granic*. It is after all the result of a competition consisting of written biographies entitled ‘Gdańsk, moje miejsce bez granic – Gdańsk, my place with no border’. The competition was announced in connection with the 10th anniversary of the Mayor of Gdańsk’s Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship.

The grant programme was launched in 2005 at my own initiative and for ten years now the city of Gdańsk (uniquely in Poland) has been awarding grants for foreign study to the most talented graduates of secondary education resident in our city. The grant allows them to take up and continue their studies at prestigious universities abroad. Initially the grants were awarded to Gdańsk graduates of the International Baccalaureate, however for the last six years it has been open to those who have completed the Polish ‘Matura’ and distinguished themselves with their extraordinary achievements.

To date, each of more than three hundred scholars has not only fulfilled the recommendations of the scholarship regulations, which state that “the scholar is obliged to attain knowledge and skills, as well as represent and promote Gdańsk at their institution and to undertake voluntary work”. Each not only studies and does community work but is also writing their own story. It is a selection of these stories which make up this publication.

I encourage you to read what these young people have to say about Gdańsk. At the same time, I thank the scholars who took part in the competition and all those whose cooperation over the last decade has helped create the future intellectual élite, not only for Gdańsk, but for the whole country.

Chairman of the Jury
Mayor of the City of Gdańsk
Paweł Adamowicz

Maria Mendel
University of Gdańsk
Marcin Boryczko
University of Gdańsk

Gdańsk, my place with no border.

About a competition which triggered academic research

INTRODUCTION

The idea for the competition arose as part of the preparations for the tenth year of the Mayor of Gdańsk's Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship in 2014.

The scholarship jury looked at scenarios of various kinds, which invariably featured curiosity over the fate of the Scholars, in particular their personal experience of studying outside Poland and the development of the interests, problems and opportunities which open up before them after their studies. So the scholars themselves had to be at the centre of attention during the anniversary celebrations, with the concentration on the biographical aspect of their achievements. It was under these conditions that the idea was born for a competition to relate their studies abroad, free speculation maybe but definitely from a 'Gdańsk perspective', more specifically from the starting point of these studies, i.e. their hometown of Gdańsk, a city which, as is mentioned in the discussions, has since the times of Hevelius sent its most talented youth to study abroad, thereby disseminating itself across the world. The multidimensionality of this relationship between Gdańsk, its scholars and the world they enter for their studies was the subject of broader reflection, to which members of the jury have often given expression, while underlining the reciprocity evident in the gratification of developmental needs. From here, it is a small step to thinking of a city with no borders which disseminates itself in the thinking of the students and in the world they encounter. "Gdańsk, my place with no border", as a slogan announcing the competition and inviting "Fahrenheit scholars", was launched in February 2015.

ORGANISING THE RESEARCH

The concept behind the competition assumed a twofold analysis of the works submitted. On the one hand, this was to be an exchange of opinion by the committee members, who also made up the jury, after reading the works. On the other, bearing in mind the potential for further research and studies based around the (academically promising) stories by the scholars

participating in the competition, the competition appeal contained clear information (see: attachment) as to the analytical nature of the research with a view to possible publication.

For this reason, a research team was created under the direction of Professor Maria Mendel (responsible for the research project and its implementation) which is still working today on the research material gathered as part of the competition *Gdańsk, my place with no border*.

In the first phase of the research, the team consisted of two researchers from the University of Gdańsk - the authors of this text. It is this phase which is described below.

In subsequent phases, the team will work as a complete unit, currently a four-person research group consisting of (in alphabetical order) Dr Marcin Boryczko, Dr Dorota Jaworska, Piotr Kowalczyk and Professor Maria Mendel.

The first phase of the analytical research took place between 13 July – 23 August 2015, when the team acquainted themselves with the work submitted to the competition. This formed the research material, presented, in line with the requirement set out in the *Competition Appeal*, in two language versions, one in Polish and one in English. It was the Polish version which underwent analysis. This was the work submitted by eight young people from Gdańsk which is presented in full in the second half of this book:

Work no. 1, author: Magdalena Bielecka

Work no. 2, author: Samuel Kozłowski

Work no. 3, author: Daniel Krajnik

Work no. 4, author: Patrycja Łapińska

Work no. 5, author: Magdalena Mastykarz

Work no. 6, author: Anna Petruczynik

Work no. 7, author: Kamila (Milena) Rudzińska

Work no. 8, author: Agnieszka Rzeźniowiecka.

All the authors are benefiting from funding from the city which permits them to study abroad. As is clear from the texts which open the present volume, the grant designed in this way is a historical continuation of a Gdańsk tradition going back hundreds of years and at the same time a unique, when compared to other cities, contemporary expression of local developmental policy.

The competition appeal refers to both biographical reflection, about life and learning as a biography (Lalak, 2010) as well as to “spatialised” socio-pedagogical thought, based on the assumption of a multitude of meanings and the self-creative role of space and places¹ (pedagogy of place), as well as to the pedagogy of memory as evoked almost automatically by the biographical narrative nature of the competition works (Demetrio, 2009; Dominicé, 2006; Mendel 2006; Theiss, 2000, et al.). The research team took this perspective as a theoretical reference point for the research undertaken.

The research methodology is qualitative in character given the nature of the research material (individual biographies, descriptions of personal experiences) as well as the aims, problems and analytical methods expressed in the research.

One of the aims is a contextual, individualised description of a general educational experience connected with studying outside one’s permanent place of living, outside the *little homeland*, in this case – Gdańsk (a theoretical context and the context of the current reality – social, political, educational; local vs. global aspects; Gdańsk vs. other cities in the world, other counties, other universities etc.).

The research concentrates on questions about generalised individual experience such as the studies which make use of the possibilities and chances created by the Fahrenheit Scholarship (see: Mezirow, 1990); about the significance of this experience from an individual and social perspective; about the elements of education and self-creation in the description (identity work, learning in a variety of places, the shaping of skills and other competences, personal development etc.).

The method in which the research material was collected (data collection) was provided by the competition, with its *Competition Appeal* (attached).

The main method of data analysis was based on the analysis of the written text understood as “writing about oneself” i.e. retaining a biographical character (see, amongst others, Demetrio, 2000). In specific terms, the analysis method will contain elements of critical discourse analysis (Gee, 1999) and display features of the phenomenographic approach, given the aims connected with the interpretation of individual notions of life and study as created by the subjects (Marton, 1981).

¹ Social thought developed after a *spatial revolution* (Soja, 1996). It stresses the need to spatialise reflections, notions, politics, education etc. (Robertson, 2010).

In phenomenography the description, analysis and understanding of experience play a pivotal role. The analyses of the research material will therefore focus on selecting the description categories at play in the authors' language as a way of creating outcome space, typical for the phenomenographic approach (Cackowska et al., 2003, p.24)².

In view of the problems posed, it will be vital for the researchers to concentrate on the individual notions of reality (which are especially important in phenomenography) established in the understanding of the various phenomena which exist in the worlds of the authors of the texts undergoing analysis.

According to the assumptions, the analysis in its consecutive phases will include:

a/ general research diagnosis (which answers detailed research questions such as: what is there in the text, what do we see in it, what is its general content),

b/ interpretation (what does this mean, in the biographical and current social contexts, as well as in selected theoretical perspectives),

c/ inference (generally – what is the outcome in the individual and social perspective; what prospective conclusions may be formulated on this basis, keeping in mind the particular authors as Fahrenheit Scholars, as well as Gdańsk as a place, in the sense of its locality and at the same time its globality etc.).

The analysis conducted hitherto, which focused mainly on phase *a*, has allowed for, as yet, an initial scientific response (research is ongoing) presented in this text as a condensed research report from the first phase of research.

INITIAL RESULTS OF THE ANALYSES WITH REFERENCE TO PARTICULAR COMPETITION ENTRIES

Work no. 1, author: Magdalena Bielecka

This very laconic text (450 words, just over 1 page) is a short historical description of Gdańsk as a multicultural place which has played a significant role in world history and Polish-German relations. By referring to the past, the author tries to construct a short narrative on her own situation in which she found herself as one of the scholars. She goes on to develop a

² Phenomenography was one of the methods in the project *Students as Journeymen Between Communities of Higher Education and Work – Journeymen*. The book presents research as part of this project, describing the method and its interesting application.

comparison between multicultural Vienna and Gdańsk, a city of many cultures and nations, and thus provokes thought on the role of history in the shaping of contemporary places.

The questions posed by the author such as, for example, *Where would I be today if 10 years ago someone hadn't instilled the love for German in me?* have a very strong resonance from the perspective of her earlier description of the history of Gdańsk and presenting it as a place in which this love was instilled. They sound like a lesson formulated from the perspective of a person happy to come from this city, which is today *a place with no border* and which, having experienced great suffering due to national differences, has really learnt to live beyond boundaries.

Work no. 2, author: Samuel Kozłowski

The entry (2,617 words) is the result of the author's deliberations on the subject of existing in two separate, although partly overlapping, worlds. It is a form of reflection on being "in-between", the result of being abroad. The text contains parts which contribute towards experiencing the "borderland" understood as a consequence of individual mobility, and renders the nature of borderland experience.

This erudite, light essay, written with an elegant distance and humour, is an accolade to the multicultural condition of the present day. It may be read as a kind of a game whose object is to discover the world by shifting one's point of perception. At one point the author presents himself through the prism of his own critical thinking and describes these familiar-unfamiliar places as an outsider, at a later point as a migrant, and finally as a local but a strange one at that, because he simultaneously belongs to many local communities. He writes, though: *I never leave, I always come back*, and when answering the question – What is Gdańsk for me? – he concludes: *(...) it is a place, to which I return (not relatively) (...) A small reality, which was once everything I knew. Although I now know a little more, it all means that I am still able to say that it's my place. Whether it has borders or not matters less. But this 'my' makes Gdańsk exceptional.* The author also comes to this generalisation, of both individual and social significance: *there's a lot to see, before you say something clever yourself, because you're always limited by your own, sometimes very local, reality. You can always step outside it and take a broader look, again and again. Maybe at the end of this chain there's nothing being said and this is what wisdom is about?*

Work no. 3, author: Daniel Krajnik

This entry, which includes drawings and is very extensive (28 pages)³, is a complex text devoted to the author's experience of living in Gdańsk and Cardiff. The text is made up of two parts. The first refers to his Gdańsk experience, the second to the British. The first part is a description of his experience growing up in Gdańsk which forms the backdrop for the author's reflections on the condition of the situations encountered. The second part presents his experience of studying abroad and informal learning outside Poland. Both parts contain drawings by the author which, from those sketched by an as yet unskilled hand to the precise drawings of a young architect, illustrate a kind of a trajectory of life and learning to observe and "redesign" the world, an expression of the author's growing maturity as a human and a professional. The fragment which ends his text may serve as a motto: *All the experiences which I gathered on the way to the University of Cardiff have allowed me to be a fuller individual and with as much enthusiasm as determination to build my dream.*

The text takes on a form of a typical memoir, aiming to collate the most important facts from a life of an individual. Its meaning can be reduced to the representation of an individual's social experience in the context of an education "in-between places", stretched out within a space which grows with each consecutive experience of learning from life which, as in this case, is a continuous movement.

Work no. 4, author: Patrycja Łapińska

The work (2,621 words) is a detailed description of events, reflections and contexts of decisions taken by the author before she was accepted on a course of study at a university abroad. The text has been written from the first person perspective in a manner of a detailed memoir. It may be treated as a presentation of the context of individual experience which constitutes a form of an interpretation of events which influence the course of a human life.

The perspective from which the author describes her experiences may be interpreted as a universal situation of a growing maturity (and independence) in life under conditions of ambitiously undertaken hard work and continuous grappling with adversities, starting with financial problems and finishing with a longing for home, and mood swings and emotions which render a rational assessment of reality difficult. The author's narrative, such as the fragment below, may be treated as a unique occasion to enter an individual's experience of the opportunity that is the Fahrenheit Scholarship: *Hell-bent, persistent and determined are*

³ A word count was not possible as the work is in pdf format.

*traits which did not apply to me before, as I was rather considered a person whose enthusiasm was short-lived. And that's how I got to my last year in secondary school when I had to take specific action towards my dream course of study. That year was extremely intense, what with getting ready for my final exams, attempting to make contact with the target university, planning, counting. That's right, counting was the biggest problem because Spain is a country where education is very expensive, and I wasn't made of money. For this reason I started to investigate the issue of scholarships and remembered a visit from a graduate of our school who told us about the Fahrenheit Scholarship, which at the time was something so unattainable that I didn't think for a second that I could use their help. I thought that this was an award intended for really talented and gifted people. I had no other alternative at the time so, feeling stressed, I visited the City of Gdańsk website to acquaint myself with the scholarship criteria. As I kept reading, my stress and fear went down, and I started to realise that I too might be able to fit a scholar profile. The aforementioned, ambitious attitude of the author forms a promising culmination to her text: *On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fahrenheit Scholarship I will tell you how I became a UN interpreter and an ambassador of Gdańsk across the world because this is my next goal, which I started pursuing 5 years ago and which has worked so far! See you then!**

Work no. 5, author: Magdalena Mastykarz

The text (3,298 words) is a literary description of the fate of a young girl whose life has been linked to Gdańsk. The text is a third-person narrative, a strategy which results in an objectivisation of reality, experienced and interpreted from an external perspective. The author presents a string of events leading up to the situation in which she finds herself at present. The author concentrates on the cause-and-effect relations which led her to the success of studying abroad. The text presents the social and cultural background which has resulted in the author's dream of studying in Germany coming true.

The narrative starts with a description of birth in a hospital labour ward, with one of the concluding scenes referring back to the event, thereby stressing the connection between chance, as given to the author by the city via the scholarship, and her rebirth in a journey to what is for her a new world: *Thanks to this scholarship Magda sets off on another journey of her life. The City of Gdańsk, the Scholarship Jury and the scholarship originator, the Mayor, Mr Paweł Adamowicz all become Doctor Wydra. They perform a Caesarean section, give Magda a hand and open up a window to the world, a world new to her.* This is a description of a scholarship as a moment of passage, a liminal reality leading up to a life transformation.

Work no. 6, author: Anna Petruczynik

Size of text: 1,389 words. The author presents a series of experiences connected with being in different places in the world, all more or less directly linked to Gdańsk. These are very sensual and condensed descriptions of situations and places which, through the water motif, a metaphor for Gdańsk, make up the experience of Gdańsk as a place with no border. The text is a series of almost film-like shots and situations thematically linked to water and metaphorically to Gdańsk. The water metaphor is a reference to the global connection not only between problems which mankind has to tackle but also the universalisation of places and situations relating to water.

In the final part of the narrative the author writes, with relevance both to her own identity, partially shaped by Gdańsk as it is, and to the identification of a city seemingly never-ending because it looks out to sea: *I've always loved to stand on the pier and look at the sea and all the ships sailing to Sweden. It broke the false border created by the sign which said 'Gdańsk'.* And then there is the conclusion, which on the one hand constitutes a philosophical and poetic description of the metaphysical experience of oneness attained through learning in the course of and from a journey, through the interiorised memory of different *places in the world*. It is an organic and simultaneously spiritual transgression which, due to water, takes place in the body and binds the different 'elements' of knowledge derived from numerous and varied places and scintillating with meaning amidst the dynamics of rapid change. On the other hand, this conclusion explicitly refers to the competition appeal, to Gdańsk as a place of one's own, perceived individually and through self-creation, a place with no border: *I'm at the end of the world, in a world where I no longer perceive any borders. The wind lashes my cheeks and the hum of the water fills my ears. I am free. My body recalls stimuli retained from different places in the world. My soul races across the ocean, the sea and rivers. This is it. I am home. I am in Gdańsk.*

Work no. 7, author: Kamila (Milena) Rudzińska

Size of text: 1,382 words. The work is a text based on the form of a complaint. The humorous tone, apparently removed from the subject, brings about an element of surprise. The author succinctly presents arguments in favour of the decision by the Jury to award her with the scholarship. The work is a narrative constructed around imaginary complaints made to the Jury. It is also a kind of interpretation of a situation of an individual who has spent five years

amidst versatile cultural backgrounds. The text may be treated as a summary of the carefully selected and thematically coherent educational and life experiences of the author.

On the perception of Gdańsk as a place with no border, the author writes: *The border between Valencia and Gdańsk has blurred, for me it is non-existent. It is beautiful but sad because I cannot be in both places at the same time. In this way, I would like to see St.Mary's Church beside the cathedral in Valencia, and while sitting in a café in Piwna St. I dream of Spanish tapas. Because the grass is always greener on the other side. Maybe if I'd stayed in Poland (...), I could be living happily in my little homeland, not missing anything and anybody, so removed in space and yet so close? Maybe I would be happier because I wouldn't be torn by such ambivalent feelings? Maybe everything would be easier? But then again, maybe not?* (emphasis added: MM,MB).

Work no. 8, author: Agnieszka Rzeźniowiecka

The text (882 words) is a description of the author's experience connected with studying abroad. It is in fact on the one hand a form of gratitude directed at the abstract city of Gdańsk. On the other hand, it is a detailed narrative on the author's achievements in psychology and a situation of a Polish student at a foreign university, with a universally interesting, though very laconic, description of the way in which education is organised (the role of lecturers and mentors) and the relationship between students and lecturers in the culture of the English university, quite exotic in comparison to Polish higher education.

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Maria Mendel

Competition Winners – Laudations by the Mayor of Gdańsk

1. Mr Samuel Kozłowski

Winner of the competition "Gdańsk moje miejsce bez granic / Gdańsk my place with no border", receiving an award from the Mayor of Gdańsk and the Grant Jury of the Mayor of Gdańsk's Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship to the value of 2,500 zł

for

a delightful entry, which leads to an understanding of the interdependence of locus and space, between affection for a little motherland and love of roaming and being at home all over the world.

for the words:

I never leave, I always come back (...Gdańsk is for me) a place, to which I return (not relatively) (...) A small reality, which was once everything I knew. Although I now know a little more, it all means that I am still able to say that it's my place. Whether it has borders or not matters less. But this 'my' makes Gdańsk exceptional. (...) There's a lot to see, before you say something clever yourself, because you're always limited by your own, sometimes very local, reality. You can always step outside it and take a broader look, again and again. Maybe at the end of this chain there's nothing being said and this is what wisdom is about?

2. Ms Anna Petruczynik

Received an honourable mention in the competition "Gdańsk moje miejsce bez granic / Gdańsk my place with no border" and an award from the Mayor of Gdańsk and the Grant Jury of the Mayor of Gdańsk's Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship to the value of 1,000 zł

for

the aquatic metaphor, expressing a Gdańsk, which has no borders; for the philosophical and poetic description of the metaphysical experience of oneness attained through the interiorised memory of *different places in the world*; of organic and at the same time spiritual transgression which, thanks to water, takes place in the body which perpetually binds the knowledge *flowing* from all around.

For words such as these:

I've always loved to stand on the pier and look at the sea and all the ships sailing to Sweden. It broke the false border created by the sign which said 'Gdańsk' (...)

(Now) I'm at the end of the world, in a world where I no longer perceive any borders. The wind lashes my cheeks and the hum of the water fills my ears. I am free. My body recalls stimuli retained from different places in the world. My soul races across the ocean, the sea and rivers. This is it. I am home. I am in Gdańsk..

3. Mr Daniel Krajnik

Received an honourable mention in the competition "Gdańsk moje miejsce bez granic / Gdańsk my place with no border" and an award from the Mayor of Gdańsk and the Grant Jury of the Mayor of Gdańsk's Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship to the value of 1,000 zł

for

the illustrated tale of the Gdańsk man learning from a place without borders; for text and drawings which, from the sketches by an as yet unskilled hand to the precise drawings of a young architect, illustrate the trajectory of life and learning to observe and design the world, an expression of a growing maturity as a human and a professional:

All the experiences which I gathered on the way to the University of Cardiff have allowed me to be a fuller individual and with as much enthusiasm as determination to build my dream.

PART II

GDAŃSK, MY PLACE WITH NO BORDERS

2.1. My Gdańsk, my place with no borders

Magdalena Bielecka

There is no doubt that Gdansk has been a unique point on Polish map for ages. It is difficult to say whether this uniqueness is the result of its special status as a semi-autonomous “Free City”, its particular location by the Baltic Sea or its rich history, which played a crucial role in shaping Europe throughout the 20th century. The fact is, however, that Gdansk epitomizes the solidarity and is firmly embedded in Europe. It is thanks to the city’s dual nature and its global patriotism that Gdansk is one of a handful of European cities that may be referred to as a “place without borders”.

The history of Gdansk actually summarizes Europe’s history as a whole. Gdansk is characterized by Hanseatic granaries, Napoleonic forts, cobblestone streets which Nazi troops marched down whilst saluting Hitler and finally, shipyard cranes which have witnessed bloody encounters between the workers and the militia. There are some human tragedies and dramas, but also some victories hidden behind this history. Because the inhabitants have rebuilt the city from scratch, have forgiven and started the relationship between Poland and Germany anew. From the rubble of the World War II emerged a dynamically developing city, which propelled by invisible sea wind manages to transcend the limitations.

It is not by accident that I mention this complicated, but at the same time beautiful history of Gdansk. This history demonstrates that the hideous ideology of Nazism which brought death to millions of people did not succeed in destroying the durable friendship between Poland and Germany. This friendship and the intercultural interactions between these two countries have shaped my whole life.

Where would I be today if someone had not introduced me to the German language 10 years ago? If someone had not showed me the beauty of German culture without unnecessary prejudices? Or if someone had not taught me that we are not able to change the past, but can

shape the future? I am certain that, without all this, my life would have taken a completely different course. My education, the German lessons that I took, school competitions, the student exchange programs and German-Polish youth projects that I participated in all led me to studying abroad. I did not, however, chose one of the universities in Berlin or Munich. Instead I decided to study at the University of Vienna, a German speaking university located in the culturally rich capital of Austria, a city with an extensive and complicated history which mirrors that of Gdansk. It has helped me to adapt and flourish in a place such as Vienna. I am therefore very grateful to Gdansk that it broke through the barriers that had been created as a result of the atrocities of World War II. I am glad that Gdansk did not forget its centuries-old traditions nor its multiculturalism.

It is said that our birthplace does not determine who we are, but it seems to me that it does influence our personality to some extent. My Gdansk, a European phenomenon on Polish territory, taught me what it means to be a European citizen. Today I can feel at home in all of Europe without forgetting my roots. Thus, I am able to transcend my own limitations and fulfill my dreams “neither rashly, nor timidly”, as described by my home city’s old Hanseatic motto.

2.2. Gdańsk, my exceptional place

Samuel Kozłowski⁴

It is quite funny that not so long ago I would not have much to write about. 'Gdańsk, my place with no border'. Throughout my life Gdańsk was the first thing I was seeing in the morning. I was passing it on the way to school, it was there every time I looked out of the window, in every bowl of cereal I had for breakfast. Did that make it special for me? No. How could it be, since it was there all this time?

In English there is a choice expression for this, 'to take it for granted'. To assume that this thing, whatever it is, will always be there and fail to notice its value because of that. And there

⁴ The winner of the competition “Gdańsk, my place with no borders”, 2015 edition.

is something sinister in it; a depressing suggestion that at some point the thing will be taken from us, or a conviction, that it has to be taken in order to see what it is worth. Absolutely not and I have no intention of starting off on such a melancholic note. I think however, that just as one has to get closer to something in order to see it with all its detail and complexity, sometimes maybe one ought to look from a distance to notice the thing they are looking at. And for this purpose, emigration is a perfect measure.

The opportunity to live abroad is a fantastically enriching experience if only one keeps their eyes wide open. I like the saying 'every travel educates, but only educated people'. What struck me most while living abroad as different, unknown to me so far, was culture. Upon deciding on going to another country the language seems to be the most predominant source of anxiety. Whether one knows it well enough or does not have too exotic an accent. It seems like a major barrier but turns out to be just the tip of an iceberg, not very significant in the big picture.

In fact when I was younger I had trouble defining the term 'culture'. What is it, this culture? Not so easy to unravel what hides beyond this word. However, some time after arriving at Cambridge I came up with quite an elegant definition: culture is everything I was lacking in at that point. I was lacking knowledge of politics, TV series or children's tales. I did not know the names of celebrities, journalists or social activists. Brands meant nothing to me, neither did popular restaurants. I had no idea about geography, did not know what is stereotypically funny, rousing or just rude⁵. I realised that the context I have as an effect of being a part of a particular society, of being a Gdańsk-dweller or just Polish, is far more diverse and hard to capture than what I had imagined. And by all means it comprises more than just a language I am speaking. And, suddenly, I found myself in the middle of a group of people, talking on random topics and discovered I do not have much to say because I am simply lacking a context.

It is not as scary as it might sound, although initially it is a rather alienating feeling. In a way though, it is a fantastic opportunity, *tabula rasa*. I could feel like a child and discover

⁵Upon arrival to another country it is worth investigating which gestures are considered offensive; it may be less universal than one would expect. Turns out that the reversed V sign, with index and middle fingers parted and forming 'V' with palm facing inwards is seen as rude in the UK, slightly less than just the middle finger. I obviously had not heard about it and when someone asked me what time do we have a class I was too far away and did not want to shout so I just used my hand to show that at two...

everything from scratch, asking questions all the time. You just need to find good friends that are not exhausted by answering them. And realising the extent of one's ignorance is always good, and teaches humility. Sometimes I just regret I have so little time; not enough to get interested in everything I want. There are so many people I could talk to, from whom I could learn something, whom I would simply like to listen to. So many things to read, and I spend whole days in front of my desk doing Maths. But that is also beneficial, just on another level. And the situation when the appetite for life is still unquenched is, I think, healthy. Frustrating, but healthy.

And people in Cambridge can sometimes be truly outstanding. At least a few times I have been told not to draw any conclusions about Brits on the basis of Cambridge students because that is simply not a representative sample of the population. The knowledge they can have on things not necessarily related to the course they are taking can be quite amazing. My friend, Joe, reading Land Economy, which is a mixture of Law and Economics, can during one day help a Geography friend in her essay, get excited about a film that is currently being screened in the auditorium because the music was written by a guy who composed perfect pieces for this and that film as well and at the end he would say that maybe Australians do have a very sensible voting system, but still they insist on choosing dummies. And that is a person that just happened to live in a room next to mine. In the adjacent building you could bump into Ted who is a guy that fills with himself two and a half pages of Google results after typing in his name because in a popular quiz show he steamrolled the rivals by, for instance, in two seconds interrupting the question master to answer *hapax legomenon* after he managed to say only 'Meaning *said only once*, which two-word Greek term...?'. Not to mention Arran Fernandez, who at the age of 18 finished his undergraduate course in Mathematics with the highest result in his year thus becoming a Senior Wrangler, a title once thought to be 'the greatest intellectual achievement attainable in Great Britain', at the same time being the youngest Cambridge student since 1773. At the mere thought of them I sometimes want to shut myself in my room for a month and just read books – at least speaking of the first two. About Arran it is best not to think at all, I guess.

Cambridge is also an amazingly multicultural and pleurably tolerant place. Every nation and religion has here their societies that organise events, celebrate feast days and balls or just dinners to come and socialise. It is impossible to take a short stroll down the street without hearing someone speaking a language you do not understand or with a clearly foreign accent.

Mixing in the crowd there are white and black people, straights and homosexuals, atheists and followers of all the biggest (and a few smaller) world religions and no one pays too much attention to someone being different. Nothing stands on the way of an atheist with Indian origins to come round to a Jewish Society dinner to eat, talk and have fun. Why would it? All of us, irrespective of our beliefs, religion or identity, have worked equally hard to get to this place.

Living there is therefore an unprecedented chance to get to know a little about different cultures and customs. A bit more than a week ago I learnt that orthodox Jews are forbidden from the act of creating on Saturdays. Just like God had a rest after a finished act of creation, they are resting as well. This means for instance, they are not allowed to use a lift on Saturday, because in the very moment we press the button indicating the floor, the electric circuit is closed, creating an electric current. Because of that in some places special Shabbat elevators are constructed, which simply stop on every floor without human intervention.

Another example is a Hindu festival Holi, celebrated annually around the start of spring. Legend has it that an evil king Hiranyakashipu once ruled the Earth and demanded everyone to worship only him. He was not listened to by his son Prahlada, who remained faithful to Vishnu and because of that his father tried to kill him. He told his sister, named Holika, to sit with Prahlada on a pyre, as she herself was immune to the fire – in some places I read she had some sort of a boon, which worked only when she entered the flames alone. In others that she had a cloak protecting her, which was then blown off by the wind. Suffice to say that Holika burnt, Prahlada left the pyre unharmed and the festival commemorates the victory of good over evil. It is a very joyful day during which people throw colourful powder at each other and frolic in the morning, after which they go to visit their families and friends to reinstate their bonds and finish feuds. I have to admit though that in this way the festival is celebrated arguably in India only. Holi, upon blending into popular culture, lost a significant proportion of its traditional, religious character and I had to become interested and read in a few places to actually unravel what the purpose of the celebrations is. On that footing I guess that an average Brit does not participate in it to respect the Hindu tradition but does it to simply have fun. In this way the custom has been acquired in Gdańsk as well under the name Color Day and it is a charitable event here.

So where is a place for Gdańsk in all this? The terms in Cambridge are intensive but short; apart from summer holidays, twice a year, in December and in March-April we have month-long holidays during which I am back in Gdańsk. Did my emigration change anything? Above all, Gdańsk itself has changed; the metropolitan railway is emerging, a new SKM train station has appeared and Galeria Metropolia is growing higher. On a smaller scale, I laugh that whenever I leave to Cambridge, something absolutely must change in the flat that I live in. Once it was a ramp for disabled people, another time the entrance door got renewed and currently a new pavement is being laid. Sometimes these are ordinary, small things which have remained unnoticed for years and I discovered only now they are not the same; taking advantage of my temporary lack of supervision they decided to change themselves.

Thus my approach is subject to change as well. I strive to look more carefully, perceive Gdańsk. There are so many things a tourist will take interest in, read about in a tour-guide and come specifically to see; things, which I pass with indifference only because I have them right under my nose. It is a challenge, to distill the singularity from regularity, and I had to get the feeling of being an outsider in my own city, for those thoughts to occur to me. Last summer proved to be an opportunity for such reflections when I invited my English friends over to Gdańsk. When planning their stay, I suddenly realised there were so many places I wanted to show and (not without prior preparation) tell them about. To such an extent, that my Polish friends, wishing to get to know the visitors, were laughing if I can squeeze them in the schedule.

As a recipient of the Fahrenheit Scholarship I am obliged to volunteer for our city. This also forces a change in one's attitude; whenever I am back in Gdańsk, I have to think about how I can be of benefit in such a short time, after all. For me it is mostly the lectures we are giving to school groups in Hewelianum Centre during Science Days, but this year I also managed to organise a few sessions with pupils from one of Gdańsk's secondary schools in which I was preparing them for the transition from the school-type to university-level mathematics. It is a great feeling to engage in regularly teaching someone; to do something completely for the sake of others and observing the effects. Alas, my term breaks are too short for me to stand a chance of organising something more than just a few meetings, but in the past academic year I was a member of Team Up, a programme offering help for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds in preparing for their GCSEs via mentoring. Once a week together with a couple of other volunteers we were taken by a taxi to Hinchingsbrooke School where we were

delivering tuition for an hour and a half. During this programme I had a chance to feel a sort of a bond, responsibility for my pupils. Each time we journeyed back I analysed the mistakes I had made or what could be improved for the next time. If you think of this, the feeling of commitment and care for others' future is really unique, and even in the busy schedule it is worth devoting time towards it.

One of the qualities I had to develop was simpler language – mostly mathematical, but not exclusively. After a few sessions I thought that it may be a little daunting for them to have told me directly what was wrong, where have I fallen short so I prepared some tiny questionnaires in which they could rate me on the scale one to five. One of the questions was 'Was I comprehensible?' but the kids apparently had not heard the word before and as a consequence I had to explain what it meant. If someone were to ask me what irony is, that would be my definition.

In an attempt to salvage my image as a teacher I should mention some success to counter that absolute failure. For the penultimate class I had planned the revision from taking roots. So there I am, explaining the standard and I think unified across the Polish teaching system method: we draw a long, vertical line on the right to the number and search for a prime number that divides it. If we find it, we write it on the other side of the line, the quotient below the original number. We continue until we hit 1, then the numbers on the right of the line get paired and land in front of the root sign, the rest multiplied stays under. The kids' glare. One of them says 'That's genius! I have no idea why our teacher was showing us some weird method; I will show him yours in the next class'. The next week they said their teacher had also exclaimed the method to be brilliant and that he was going to teach it from then on.

Living abroad in some sense broadens the perspective; somehow I understand better than before that Gdańsk is just a tiny fragment of a huge globe. That Poland is a minute, white-red island on a map and somewhere beyond it there is an enormous, colourful world. And there, vast lands where our concerns, opinions, politics and life do not have the slightest meaning. This feeling teaches impartiality and distance. It shows that there is a lot to be seen before one can say something wise, because we are always restricted by our own, sometimes very local, reality. One can always go beyond it, look broader, then again and again. Maybe at the end of this chain there is just silence and that is the true wisdom?

But this distance has another side to it. Sometimes I feel as if I was stuck between two worlds. On the one hand, not being in Gdańsk for so long it is sometimes unavoidable to feel like a stranger amongst friends. Not seeing them, not participating in the same events, not having the same experiences. On the other, during the term there is never too much time for socialising – sadly, I am not one of those people you never see working while also always getting firsts in the exams – I just have to spend a fair amount of time daily banging my head against mathematical problems. And when, during the breaks, meetings in London are being organised I for obvious reasons cannot participate in them either.

This dichotomy has a few funny side effects. One of them is the fact that I never go back; I always come back. When the term is finished my friends from Poland ask me when I will come back to Gdańsk, and whenever I am in Gdańsk those from the UK ask when I will come back to Cambridge. The thing is, in Polish I can always say 'I come back to Poland', regardless where I am right now. I come back, because I consider it my home. A default place where you always come back because that is where you come from. But in English this is a purely relative matter, dependent on the place you are in at the moment you utter the words. You say 'I'm going back' when you are in one place and want to indicate you will leave it soon. Whereas when you depart and want to say you will be back here again you say 'I'm coming back' (in eight days, say). There being no such thing as a default home (which is perhaps more linguistically-logical) is certainly quite a peculiar difference between the languages.

What is Gdańsk for me then? It is a place, to which I non-relatively, persistently come back. A city in which I cannot get lost, even when I try. In which I can roam with closed eyes, standing still in one place and where with every street, pavement and tram stop I can associate a distinct picture from memory. A small reality that was once everything I knew. And even though now I know a bit more, I can still say it is my place. Whether it has borders or not, that is not relevant. But the very word 'my' makes it distinctively special.

2.3. Gdańsk – Cardiff. On place in between the places

Daniel Krajnik⁶

Every night they burst and disseminated with lights, creating right before my eyes a scene I gazed into like a child just before falling to sleep.

Part One

Gdańsk

Every time I am looking back into the past I recall these peculiar moments right before falling asleep. I can see like it was today long times lying on one side with my eyes half opened staring at the night sky behind the window. I believe that from the outside these moments passed like every other minute on a clock, however these were exactly these moments when it came to me the easiest to enter the world of imagination. Peace and quiet at night always made it simpler to set one's thoughts free. Things I saw then were somewhat brighter, bigger, more captivating and compared to roar of days in kindergartens how much easier it was then to look at everything from outside. But there were exception, there were moments like that even during the day – there were drawing classes. The competitions for the best imaginary characters, which our teachers used to set up for us and I can easily recall the incredible engagement that they could rise between us. I clearly remember our playfulness for making up all traits of the characters, setting up the plot behind them and mixing each other, to-, from- and for different situations. Any time I changed kindergartens I could always find a person driven by it as much as I was – everybody admired imagination back then. Competitions were so popular back then, but victory in one was not only about being proud – it was about the further talks and comments from other children interested in your piece of work. Because back at that times fantasy was not only a journey on its own, but also something was genuinely popular.

These moments before falling asleep could bring my imagination back for these peculiar regrets, which I could fall into any time during the day. It never came easy to explain, but for some reason in my earliest youth I found it the most important always to be in several

⁶ The honourable in the competition „Gdańsk, my place with no borders”, 2015 edition

places or to do several things at the same time. I could believe that otherwise I will miss some one-off, some life-changing opportunity. Obviously at that age everything could be a matter of life and death and thus I was in a constant urge to push myself to the impossible – I could not stand a thought of having come back home knowing that there was something missed. How trivial could these things be? Passing through either longer part of the pavement or the shortcut across the grass – “what could happen if instead of the pavement I passed through this grass?” How many different scenarios could be born from such situations – all it took was just a bit of imagination.

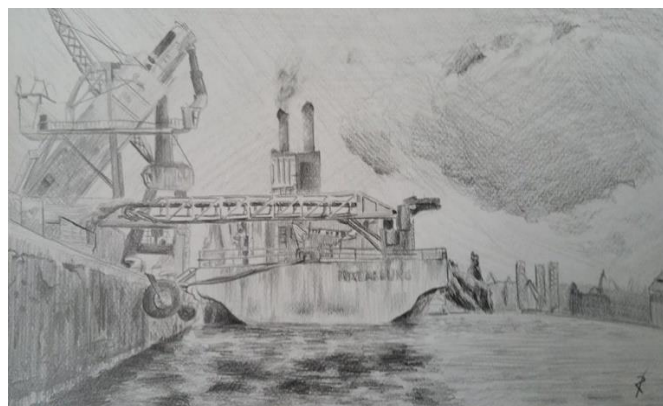
And how many things there was to be lost in the clamor of the day? During the trip to one of the Gdańsk’s famous places called Góra Gradowa we photographed the panorama over St. Mary’s church, the famous Długa street, as well as Lotos company’s chimneys and numerous towns in the distance. However it was only at night when the rest came back: the voice from the speaker at the main rail station, the steel beams spread around the construction site, the colors on clothes of the people going out of the bus.

But the single thing, which I recall most vividly at these moments before falling to sleep was the picture appearing like in-between blinkings of the big, glary orange on my city’s sky. It made me wonder how the street lamps managed to cause this powerful glare. And in the process of this long staring into that picture eventually let me create a peculiar analogy to painting lessons I took. The specific intelligence developed on these lessons could bring my sight and combine it with the motion of my body and make the vision sensitive onto all optical phenomena. And what sort of phenomenon it was, this flowing, shining in turn orange and violet sky. It drew my attention to the extent, so I could imagine how the spectacle behind my eyes is in fact a piece of art made by a talented, skilled student.



I was lucky to be born in Gdańsk, in the city where I could always find a place to realize my passions. Regardless what they would be, I could always count on finding somewhere people, doing something similarly creative. Wrzeszcz and Nowy Port, Brzeźno or the City Centre itself. However it was the Pałac Młodzieży on the Ogarna street, which devoured me the most. It was in this place, where I started my biggest passion, which was the academic craft of drawing and painting. Combination of excellence in viewing as well as using tools for reflecting the visible world. To some extent they became the way of viewing the world, regardless the subject. Rock gigs in student bars or meeting of young poets all fell under the one basket.

People whom I met in this school were as passionate about our work as me and together we could discuss for long hours techniques, artists and our favorite places in Gdańsk for open air drawing exercises that we enjoyed so much. We used to go on self-organized trips together searching for the most interesting and most picturesque spots in the city. They could lead us everywhere, to the area of dockyards, bays, ports, as well as narrow streets, churches inundated in copious gardens, small and huge bridges, views from the tops of the city's towers. These trips allowed us to look at Gdańsk always from a new perspective. Although the trips alone used to bring us much enjoyment these were the subsequent presentations of our works before our teachers and other students that we took so much enjoyment from. I remember how much enthusiasm could be brought by telling our stories about people we met there and our interpretations of the peculiarities we saw there. That was especially interesting to see our listeners being inspired by our stories and coming up with their own suggestions for trips' destinations, which often we used for future trips.



Our teacher used to say that „creativity is contagious”. It seemed to me holding true especially in our city. It could happen that the other students in our school, who picked up our enthusiasm for the open air drawing sessions could tell us about these special places in Gdańsk, where groups of artists gathered for meetings. Such news always rose lots of enthusiasm, because these places could encapsulate much creative energy, which always provided great substance for drawings. Gdański Archipelag Kultury was one of them, where at “Łaźnia” a group of jugglers used to set their meetings. The name “Łaźnia” is what we used for officially called the Centre of the Contemporary Art, where took place another drawing course. The name wasn’t pejorative at all, but was simply a popular name for the school, with which the ours sometimes competed in academic drawing and painting.

The pitch of the secondary school nr IX provided the jugglers and other artists with space for their exercises. This was also the place where we saw them for the first time in one of the late afternoons at the end of May. The place wasn’t far away from our school, so we could go there straight away after finishing the classes. Our friends from the course went there some time before us to take time for their warm-up. On our way there I can recall how marvelous the view over the river Stara Motława was, especially when we reached the bridge at the Podwale Przedmiejskie. I will never forget the first impression this place made on us – just after passing the corner of “Łaźnia” in a slight darkness that rose up after the dusk we saw lights of flaming torches threw high into the air in accord with the rhythm of drums. Sunlight was at that time already weak, what was always a particular drawback of open air drawing sessions, while the last extinguishing beams of sun could in a matter of minutes dangerously exhaust one’s eyes. Therefore we naturally didn’t expect to stay longer, but it turned out that the light of the flying torches reflected from a massive, white gypsum painted wall of the school on the opposite side what provided us with enough light to continue drawing even after the dusk. Although at first we were not sure, whether the organizer of the meetings will let us stay, but it turned out that we were not the first students from a drawing course who came for their trainings. We learnt that a number of artists in Gdańsk specializes in sketches of juggling scenes and we clearly saw why. Constant motion of the dancing artists made a copious subject for drawings, which we could literally study for hours.

Some time after at one of the following juggling meetings one of the artists offered us introduction to their craft, which he advocated perfect for developing reflex and focus, “especially useful when taking exams” he said. He introduced us also to people, who attended

their meetings for a long time and who shared his view. They told us that their meetings not only let them to have a break from their demanding courses on Polytechnic of Gdańsk, but also helps them concentrate during their various exams and reviews. We fell into this offer and from that time on along with drawing we also in turns started training their craft of juggling. The trainings were really rewarding and soon we developed our skills not only for two, but to three and even four juggled balls at once.

All these activities allowed me to create strong bonds with this part of Gdańsk. Still by now I can easily recall to great detail all these numerous alleys and streets from Ogarna street all the way to Długa street. I can remember clearly as well the impression, which the crystal-white class of our school in Pałac Młodzieży sued to make on me. The teachers always came some time before us to clear the previously unattended class and prepare the necessary materials and they were never perfunctory in it. By the time we entered the classroom, which normally was around three o'clock, the direct sunlight was already shooting deep into the building highlighting the beauty of this space and the elements of the composition waiting there for us. I recall that sometimes I as well came a bit earlier, so to take time for a warm-up before the classes. Because our department was at the top floor of the building, we had access to its roof, from which marvelous view over that part of the city centre was visible. The first thing that presented itself on that view, was standing on the opposite side Qubus hotel, which smooth texture of the west side was lit from the bottom by the glimmering waters of Stara Motława river. On the right from there the line of roof on the St. Paul and Peter's church, partially hidden by the adjacent block of flats. Striding further on the warm roofing felt we could notice in-between the trees the historic tops of one of the Gdańsk's administrative bureaus. Later I was about to regret that I couldn't witness how just a step from there, the site of the previous Big Synagogue was being under construction for the new Shakespearean Theatre. The roof of our school could be one of the best observatory points to see how it was about to be risen, week after week, and it could be fantastic to capture it on drawings, but just as much as all the rest of this remarkable panorama.

The incredible phenomenon of this place, which I recall especially well from the journeys to the school, was as follows: firstly seeing it from the street level and then the change, which it underwent after seeing it from above. I sometimes imagine that a feature that I would add to the building's plans, would be only an exterior, glazed elevator, which would

bring students' attention onto this phenomenon. Also so I could capture on paper all the stages, how this area changes, while rising over the ground floor after floor.

Quite a different impression could be seen on the opposite side, where originated the dense tissue of the historic city part – the part which I believed encapsulated the energy of the city. Closed in a watertight rectangle historic buildings stood squeezed in polygonal strips, and in-between them thousand years of city's history seemed to be hidden. From the top floors the landscape of never-ending, red tiles spread itself and iterated between different floor levels into a series of design options. On its left rose the slender tower of the Old City Hall and behind it the massive walls of the St Mary's church.

At some point I realized that all the extracurricular activities I was engaged in helped me to work better in my school in Jasień. Even though I could already before efficiently remember topics in the school I started since them associate facts quicker and easier remember the material from classes. Creativity, with which the extracurricular classes helped me to think throughout the day, allowed me to quicker adopt fractions or physical theorems.

My teachers also seeing my engagement started giving me additional tasks, like presenting the story of our classes but in a new way. Although it took much more time and some tasks could keep me working by my desk late at night, I never considered myself to have not enough time. In this way royal polish families could rise from death, history of Gdańsk become more vivid only through pages of comic books or elegantly illustrated essays.

One day my arts and crafts teacher seeing the portfolio of my drawings invited me to his Friday classes, that he organized with other students. The place however differed dramatically from where I used to take drawing classes before – while for example the hall of the Pałac had a distinctive, representative character characterized by its unusually high ceiling, this school's classes were based in a cosy, little basement. Loosely hanged textiles and various objects spread all across the place and gave impression of a dense, energetic and full of creativity space, where students could create and work together. The place was shared also with theatrical group, what was especially beneficiary for us, due to a number of specific equipment, which the group borrowed sometimes even from the Teatr Wybrzeże and agreed to let us to use it for our drawing composition. We used to gather around the round, wooden

table, in the middle of which we put the equipment to be drawn – I remember how its lack of edges made it easy to talk with everyone and to meet new people.

At the end of the classes we used to sit together with our teacher around the table and talk about our hopefully at that point finished works. What made me especially keen on these meetings was straightforwardness and lack of limits in interpretations of the merits behind our works. The cozy atmosphere of the place fostered discussion and because at that time only a number of us were left in the school we were much encouraged to conversations. It gave me opportunities to talk about my trips with people from the other school for open air drawing sessions around the Gdańsk city centre and the fascinating personas and places we came across on these journeys. Then our teacher told us about his own tours through the city at the time when he attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk. Conversely to our trips, the area which he recorded the warmest was the region of Gdańsk Wrzeszcz. He could tell us for hours about the changes that this part of the city underwent just in the last couple of years. In the course of his stories an interest towards this part of the city originated in me, especially because of the foreseen, dramatic changes that were about to take place there. It made me think about the value of these drawings after the time when the region will undergo the total metamorphosis.

The feeling that led me at that time was concentrated predominantly around the historic part of Wrzeszcz. Being aware of the contemporary architecture that already started erecting all across Grunwaldzka avenue. Therefore I started my studies from standing on its sides Jaškowa Dolina park and Legiony avenue. Firstly my favorite topics were brick houses spread copiously throughout the whole region. Overgrown gardens or abandoned alleys spoke in a peculiar artistic language, which I found very valuable in my works. High ceilings and thus windows created incredible light effects, when the Sun started rubbing its beams across decorated sills and painted window frames. Under such conditions it became easy to imagine scenes that could take place there – couples of lovers sitting under the garden tree or group of kids hiding during a game in one of the dark alleys. Diligently set proportions and shapes of all objects in a scene, and subsequent overlaying them with lights and shadows, brought me very close to that place. Especially because sometimes it became necessary to come back to some places more than once, when the work stretched across several days. Changing sunlight and often untoward weather conditions made me to be in constant motion, so to for example avoid direct sunlight on the paper or to escape the rain.



At that time people passing me by sometimes gazed with interest onto my work. An older person could sometimes query me about the history of the place, which often imaginary from my side was substantiated by their experiences. It became especially useful, when I tried to enrich my drawings with the stories happening in the area. Staying up-to-date with the facts gave them therefore much more value, than otherwise based solely on imagination. The stories also helped me to sustain interest to the site, while slow and meticulous work that my works required could sometimes become tedious.

The city centre was obviously never less inspiring for my drawing, however they influenced them in quite a different way than Wrzeszcz. While the scale and character of the buildings were much more momentous in the Centre, Wrzeszcz evoked with more coziness of more recent history and seemed to be more informal. The skyscrapers in the centre created long shadow, which could drastically change the atmosphere in their area. The work that I recall most accurately from that time was around the tower of the Mercury hotel next to modern Madison shopping mall. I remembered how much I tried to capture the changing mood, while the lighting conditions changed throughout the day. At that rainy time of the year it could take me weeks before I set myself for the task. I found it fascinating to observe how the changes affected people in this area. The restaurant next to the tower faced particular problems due to the guests, who left the exterior part of the restaurant due to glare from the reflected sunlight from the copiously glazed tower.



A famous writer from Gdańsk, Paweł Huelle said to me once, that real creativity has little to do with knowledge itself. Conversely it can grow on its own and requires no diligent knowing of dates, names, facts. The best solutions are in fact very simple and every great artist can even in the most ordinary situations find origins of great stories. I remember that this thought set roots deeply in my mind, but the day when I finally realized its true meaning was, when me and my friends went to that year's Baltic Comic Festival in the main library. Fortunately we managed to arrive just in time for the meeting with David Lloyd, who was one of the artists behind the famous comic book "V for Vendetta". I can recall our fascination for the David's words, when he talked about his work. What we found especially interesting were the reasons, why he called it "simple, and even naïve", because it referred only to superficial facts and happenings. He proclaimed that these were the main reasons why his work inspired many academics to perusing the events he referred to from the presented point of view. After the meeting I had a chance to properly notice the scale of the whole festival. Its organizers prepared all the talks, set translators and distributed gifts to the guests with a great care for their details, so that at every moment during the festival a sense of preemptive planning could

be felt. What made on me the biggest impression was care for high quality, contemporary design, which resembled me the attention that we used to put as young kids to our own works. The series of further experiences inspired me to take on this specific environment, which I believed could teach me a lot in terms of creativity and innovation. At that time the meeting of this community were based in the only Comic Library in the area, located in Suchanino estate.

It made me glad that sort of creative people I met at the festival were also present on our meeting in that library. “Komiksiarnia” as it was commonly called at the time I went there was just undergoing dynamic development. Increased funding that came from the main library gave hope to its owners for moving into the most proliferated parts of the city. Not often mercenary, but also culturally-wise comic books became more and more popular, although in the past they were very rarely put on the same level as the “high art”, which I studied before. This approach of changes and dynamicity could be felt on our course, when more and more young authors gained disruptive popularity. Following innovations in connectivity and possibilities of open hardware people in that place were much forward-thinking. Therefore I remember this place to be very exciting.

With regard to innovative approach, this community embraced to the similar extent the importance of common education among us. The teachers put lots of attention to keeping us up-to-date with our homework and good grades. Sometimes they organized for us as well private lessons for teaching us the material from mathematics or history. At the same time they tried to withdraw from textbooks and simple memorizing information, as opposed to creative ways of learning. One that I remember the most was a model of a site, pinned all across with questions about historic periods. As an exercise for us we were told to go through the site and answer all the questions.

Attention they paid to our education made me think further about my future course on university. While being aware of the opportunities behind engineering studies I didn't want completely withdraw from the creative and artistic approach to the world, which I was developing for so long. The breakthrough happened when my dad took me to the Polytechnic of Gdańsk Architecture Department, where I could take a closer look to the work of students there. I remember my surprise when learning about all the creative ideas for architecture that students could implement, while following the industry standards and solving technical issues.

I found it appealing to notice analogy between their work and many of my previous projects and competitions, which I took part in in the past. Simultaneously I arrived at certain doubts, whether academic drawings I was practicing before could be of any use in the field of architecture. However conversation I have further made with graduates of the school helped me understand that drawing in fact is an integral part of architectural design process. They explained to me that skills of architects range from pure creativity to strictly technical rules and I slowly started to convince me to the decision that architecture suits me well for realizing my talents.

At the same time during one of still tenaciously conducted open air drawing sessions in the Gdańsk city centre I came across a very intriguing person. When I sat on the doorsteps opposite of a one tenement house on Ogarna street, which I found then to be of particularly outstanding beauty, suddenly the door behind me opened and a young women dressed for a job stepped out. At the same moment I turned around to move aside, I notice the label next to the door informing that in that house was located an architecture office. While I became recently interested in this pursuing career in this job, I asked, although a bit clumsily, the young architect for memories from her studies in Polytechnic of Gdańsk. To my surprise she couldn't answer this question, because she received her degree from an university in New York, which she pursued directly after finishing high school in Gdańsk. In addition to that she told me her story of leaving the city already at my age and flying all across the Atlantic, without a penny by her side, but instead with a big American dream. Following the surprise I was mesmerized by her story, while I didn't take ever before into consideration studying abroad.

Visit in Architecture Department eventually led me to signing up for a course preparing for taking exam for this course. As always it didn't take me a long time to come across a list of various schools offering such preparations, but because of my already at that time busy schedule, which was getting even worse following the shrinking time before the final exams in high school the choice between them was really hard. In the end I decided on "Kuźnia" school, looking at the excellent opinion it has among many of my classmates, who shared with me at that time ambitions for architectural studies. The exams, which I sat in the school assured me again about the protean character of studying architecture, which I was glad about, while this merit was taught me already on many of my previous extracurricular

activities. The exams required excellence on various fields starting from artistic and ending on analytical ones.

One of the key moments from that time started, when one day I met one of my old teachers, who happened to have in Gdańsk his own architectural office. After he learnt about my decision upon my study course he proposed taking me for a day to his office to show the work of real architects. This news made me enormously glad, while I wanted to see at first-hand how classes on university are translated onto actual architectural practice.

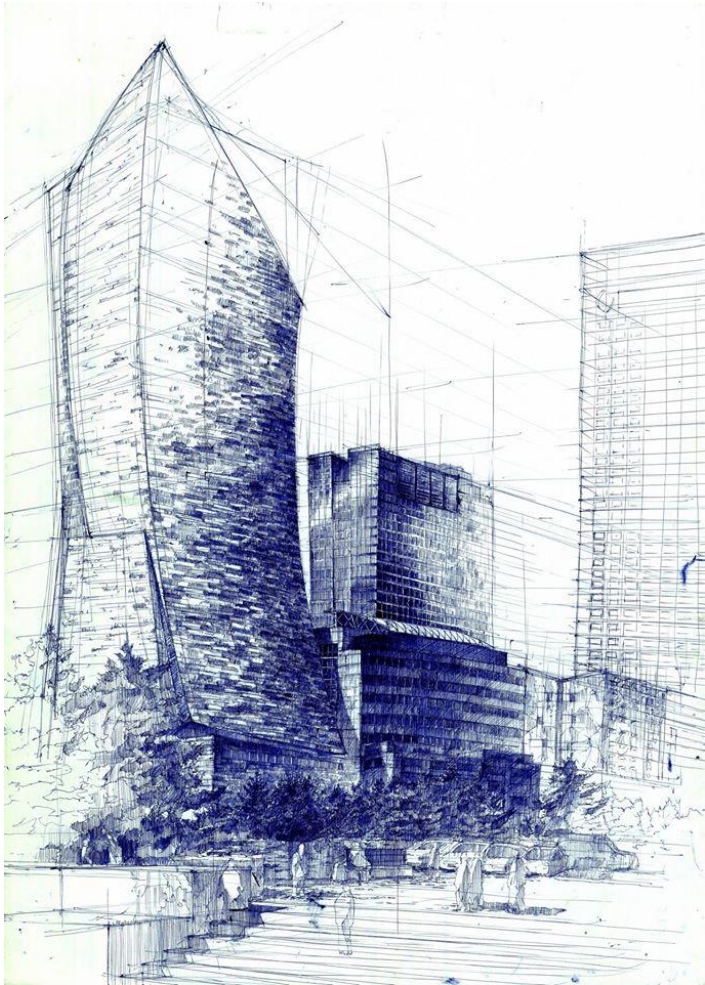
Bearing this in mind and remembering the enthusiasm, with which he talked about his work I arrived at the very morning to his office, which was based at that time in Wrzeszcz. He showed me then project of a hospital, on which they worked at that time and asked me, if I could help them conduct measurement of its currently existing part. The building located over fifteen kilometers from Gdańsk allowed me and a recent architecture graduate also from Gdańsk to have a fascinating conversation on our way to draft the plans of the future hospital. The one comment, which I remember by this day from this conversation touched the importance of drawings and its negligence in current state of the industry. Drawing design, which was especially important for him, according to what he said nowadays expires due to advancements in computer design. He told me that he was glad for me, that I had so much exposition to drawing even before I started college.

During conversations with other students in my architecture preparation course in „Kuźnia” I started learning a lot about trends and characters of architecture departments in Gdańsk and throughout the country. Finally news reached me that in Warsaw there was a school called “Domin” known for remarkable excellence and their students already for many years receive the highest notes in university’s exams across Polish cities. Although long distance between our cities I couldn’t let go this gossip and I needed to check it by myself. The first telephone conversation with the school’s director only worsened everything, when I was told that the works I have seen before, which were the only one publicly published by the school, were only on average level and that the best works are kept in-house only. I was aware of the challenge it put before me, but I found it almost impossible to work like before after I learnt all this. At some point I made the decision on organizing weekly journeys to become one of the students of this excellent school in the capital.

Although the plan seemed at the beginning difficult to implement, after the second, the third journey, it started becoming more and more easy. As it turned out I wasn't the only student from Gdańsk, who decided on travelling between the cities for classes in Warsaw and soon I started making new, fascinating friendships. Teachers were demanding, but there was never a situation, in which I had to ask them for slowing down. Quickly I noticed gigantic improvements in my craftsmanship.

Long distance between the two cities successfully hindered possibility of coming back yet on the same day and made it necessary to stay in the capital during nights. However the sleeping rooms offered by the school fell deep into my mind due to the mesmerizing view I saw on the night cityscape of Warsaw skyscrapers. The school located in the city centre enjoyed view straight onto the 38-floor Liebeskind's skyscraper, at that time just under construction, surrounded by a showcase of polish icons of architectural modernism. Every night they burst and disseminated with lights, creating right before my eyes incredible view I gazed into like a child just before falling to sleep. It sometimes seemed to me, that every week I stored just a little left energy to take some time before sleeping to inundate in thought before this view. Just like several years before as a young child I could gaze into the bottom lit Gdańsk sky and imagine things out of this world, then I could realize how much luck I

already had so far, and really believe that these things started to take shape in Warsaw.



Although the challenge the new school put before me I managed to week after week live up to its expectations. Therefore I was given opportunity to go with a group of the last year high school student for a study trip to Sychów., during which we organized architecture exams. It assured me about my level and reminded me about the preparations for the high school final exams, which were coming soon.

After taking them architecture applicants had to wait some more time for their internal exams, which consisted from several parts, each examining different sets of skills. During the purely drawing part, we had to gather in the courtyard inside and draw the objects prepared several days before in it. Together with people, who travelled to the school in Warsaw with me we organized ourselves a week before the exams to prepare ourselves to it. In the building of Polytechnic in Gdańsk we came every day to do sketches of the already set composition and in this draw almost from memory the task.

Unaware of the things that were about to happen in the coming months I spent day after day, from the early morning until late evening drawing and analyzing with friends different exams scenarios. Time spent in that remarkable estate dangerously allowed me to feel attached to it. Architecture of the building itself always used to make impression on me, but only then we started to realize the momentum of the things happening, like we were taking part in something special. After all it was only a matter of days when hundreds of high-school graduates from around Pomerania, will undergo the same sets of tests and will be assessed by the same examiners, who years ago also underwent similar process. The sense of history made me really proud of being part of this. I remember on the last day going out of the main building and stepping down the stone stairs onto Narutowicz street how the beams of direct sunlight went through interweaved branches of trees casting long shadows and the sense typical for these warm, late afternoons of the early summers.

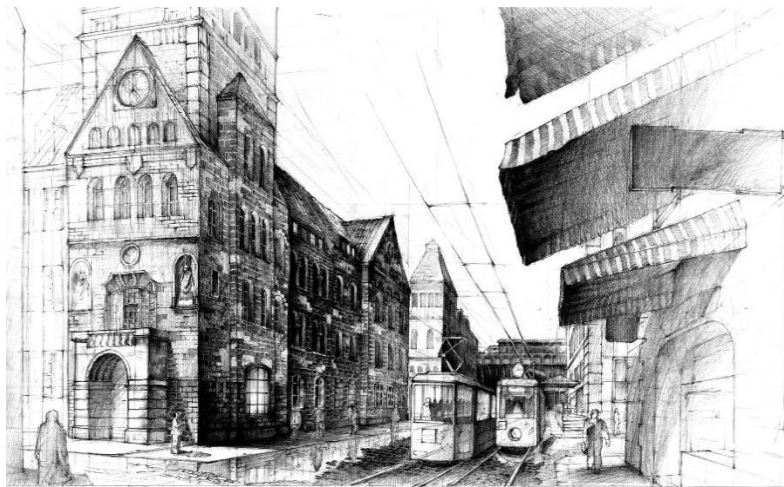


After finished exams I came back to Domin for the summer, so to finish my drawing training started in the middle of the academic year. Because I was cautioned so many times about the importance of drawing in the architectural design process I knew that at that summer I had a one-off opportunity to prepare myself before the start of my first year on university.

With the beginning of July to the Warsaw school new set of last year high-school students poured in, desperate to receive training for architectural exams in their cities. By that time me and my friends reached the level of excellence in drawings, that the director of the school agreed to assign us to our own groups, for education of which we were from that moment responsible. This quite a new experience changed the feeling on every open air trip we went from that moment an every classes we organized. Always we had to look after some younger students, who could be less or more easy to learn. Nonetheless the amount of experience allowed me to develop in several fields, inter- and personally, as well as technically by looking at mistakes of students in their drawing craftsmanship, which not so long ago I committed as well.

During a drawing session in one of the churches in the Warsaw's historic part I received a phone call from the City of Gdańsk Bureau informing about the positive consideration of my application for Fahrenheit scholarship. It made me very happy, and call back to my mind the advices of the architect from Gdańsk, who did her degree in New York. I

remembered her comments on the merits of universities abroad combined with my knowledge of British graduates, who became major figures in the world of architecture like Norman Foster or Richard Rogers. It encouraged me to decide on translating my current education onto expectations of universities abroad. However I remembered that a big fraction of my high school class could study together with me if I stayed in Gdańsk, but I knew that if I want to create architecture on the highest levels I need to make some hard decision.



Part Two

Cardiff

Cardiff University and Welsh School of Architecture after all didn't disappoint me giving us opportunities to work on projects in a number of European architectural centres like London, Stuttgart, Barcelona. Architectural design turned out to be very open-minded, free from coursebooks and focused on individual ingenuity and adroitness. Fantasy, with which I so much fell in love already from the young age, turned out to be key part of assessment.

What struck me the most was the fact that the very ideas, which I saw before in Architecture department in Polytechnic in Gdańsk, are here prioritized and explicitly separated from technical solutions, which typically are assigned to engineering schools. The first year of our course covered only a fraction of technical solutions of architecture. The most

important was learning by doing, teamwork and individual research in libraries or outside through mock-ups made by us. The driving factor of every project was imagination, while without coursebooks we couldn't fall into any previously made theory. Methods of attempts and failures were a common working ethos and although took more time, taught us much more than otherwise ready-made answers.

One of the projects was a theoretical building on the Welsh beach Gower, which natural landscape was listed in AONB records (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The story of my project began with a captain of a ship, whose one of the sailing crew directed wrongly and destroyed the ship by setting it on the sands of Gower. The angry captain expelled the clumsy sailor and abandoned the ship with all the goods it transported at that time. The sailor having nowhere else to go settled down on the site and his small town welcomes numerous guests today coming to the Gower for vacations. Some of them also notice a series of wooden planks sticking out of the sand, of what currently remained from over a hundred years old ship "Helvetia".

The idea for a building inspired by a deteriorating ship, was to transform it onto a monument, by shaping it alike. The "Helvetia"-based curvature of the east elevation, was about to show up slowly, following the changes in the slumping ground. In this way, while the Helvetia will disappear its memory remain.



In the course of the last two years I had a chance twice to visit Barcelona, where we worked on a project in the area called 21@, which referred to plans of transforming this part of the city into contemporary architecture of twenty first century. Our tutor brought us also to people who really worked on the site, for which we prepared theoretical plans. Except copious descriptions of technical factors there we also learnt about the importance of collaboration between architects and various representatives of city council and other public and private institutions.

In addition to that our tutor brought us to the building site of a famous Sagrada Familia church, which was one of the biggest architectural projects I had a chance to see. The main architect of the construction brought us to the very top of the building, where the exposed steel bars gave us acute insight into the construction methods employed on site. The project started long before the first software for computer-aided design had been published was the breakthrough in its field. The opportunity of seeing all the details hidden inside the porcelain tiles and concrete cast forms inspired us tremendously for further work.



In the middle of the year we were given opportunity, special among architectural school in Britain to go on Erasmus exchange with another European university. Due to highly regarded German school, about which I heard many positive commentary, I applied for the

exchange with University of Stuttgart. One of the requirements of the exchange was fluency in German language, which took an exciting challenge before me. Although the exchange was about to last less than a typical Erasmus program I was convinced about the opportunities behind it.

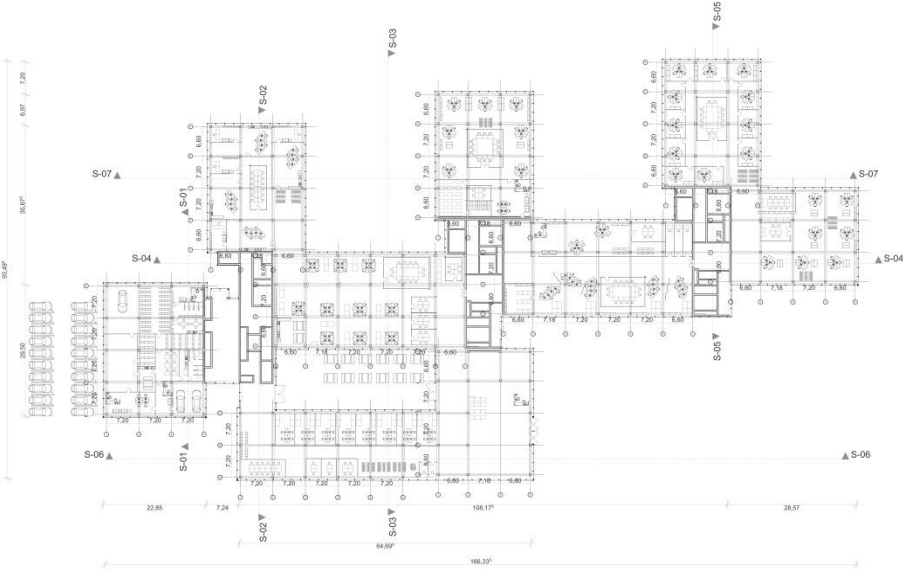
In order to learn the new language quicker I was proposed for the summer to go for a summer language school GLS in Berlin, for which I was offered partial funding from my university's special program. The trip to this excellent language school was very appealing for me, not only because of the chance of cracking an internationally important language, but also because I had a chance to visit one of the biggest European capital cities. During my studies in GLS school I visited a number of big architectural projects, like for example Reichstag building. The government building renovated by Norman Foster office gave me fascinating insight as much as another Jewish Museum project by Daniel Libeskind's practice. In this way I had a chance to combine lessons of a foreign language with the very demanding architecture course.

I have learnt a lot from the people, whom I came across in this exchange. The person, who rented my apartment worked at that time on setting up her first advertisement agency. For my help with refurbishing of the house she offered me insight into business decisions and working culture in the offices she worked for. After telling me that entrepreneurial skills will be as much needed in architecture, as in her industry, and therefore I should bear her advices in mind.

In one break from my course in Berlin I came back to Gdańsk, where at the same time Fahrenheit scholarship recipients helped with organizing the 4th International Conference of Gdańsk Citizens. While helping in the conference I had unexpectedly opportunity to put my classes of German language into practice, while a number of guest spoke in German language only. It was a challenge, while at that time I only started my course and I couldn't yet speak fluently. However, the guest were very positive and many of them were glad only to hear basics of their language.

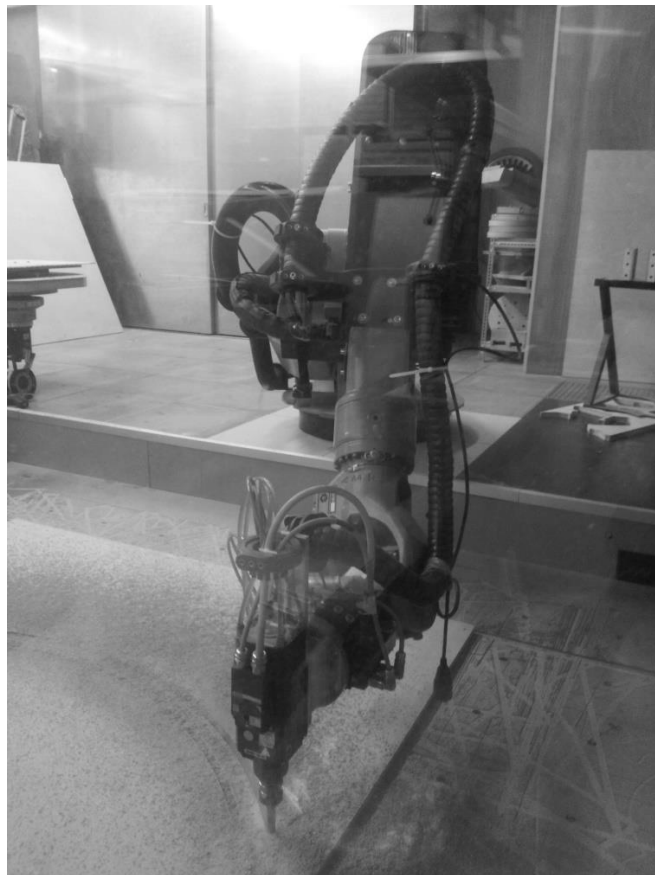
When summer came to end I arrived to Stuttgart, where for the period of September I was assigned to a group to finish my education of German language according to the standards set by university. In August with the second person who travelled to Stuttgart with

me we chose our projects for the next term. I was glad to learn that my team worked with well-known Bosch company, who required from us design of its new headquarter in Gerlingen. For this project we were taken to the building, which was before occupied by researchers and where we were shown presentation to understand standards of the company and would be the requirements from us, architects.



Except the main project with Bosch company we had to as well take part in seminars in other institutes. For one of them we were presented with ILEK Institute funded by famous German architect. Frei Otto after his recent death was awarded with the prestigious Pritzker Prize given yearly to architects with most remarkable achievements in the field. ILEK Institute set by him was on high level of digital fabrication and was very demanding for its students. On the course I learnt a lot about new applications of technology and I could talk with great architects.

In addition to the seminars I took part in I could contact Institute of computational design, which also became famous for yearly designed pavillions using computer software and cutting-edge materials. Although I didn't have a chance to sign up for seminars with them I collaborated with them on Bosch project. Their insight into computational design helped me to solve a number of issues in my work. Also it did well in inspiring me for working in a similar way and to set my goal further in my education.



After finishing my course in Stuttgart I came back to Gdańsk, where together with other recipients of Fahrenheit scholarship we began working on program Mentorship. The goal of this program was to help ambitious high school students with developing their talents and passions, as well as helping with applying to universities. While still in Stuttgart we started work on graphic design of various promotional objects, which further we used during events in schools and universities. It turned out that the friend, with whom I used to travel to

Warsaw for the drawing classes became a teacher in the department of this school in Gdańsk and he agreed to let me prepare presentation of the program among his pupils. Successfully I stayed in touch with a number of them and had opportunity to see how they developed towards studies of architecture.

During that Christmas recess I contacted as well the architect, who some years later invited me to this office and presented with the projects they worked on. Having more experience in the world of architecture I was fascinated, in watching once again his projects and noticing the difference in understanding of them. Also it made a great impression on me to see how the building I helped him with on a small portion of work turned out to become an occupied space.

After coming back to Cardiff I realized that although learning new language was a great challenge, calling back the English language, which had managed by my come back to some extent to deteriorate required some effort again, especially because of presentation of all my work from the exchange. I also rose doubts about translating my experiences from Stuttgart back into the curriculum in Cardiff. While both institutions presented high level of educations, they differed at some, sometimes fundamental issues. However, it turned out that in the second term in Cardiff I could find the same interest in parametric design, while the chair of our year was conducting studies in that field for some time already. Nonetheless I had to make a shift back to creative way of thinking about my project, which primarily embraced in Cardiff was one of these fundamental differences between the universities.

Also at the beginning of the second term the university organized study trip to Zurich, so to learn from the cutting-edge techniques used in the local projects there. On arrival architects of many of the buildings there took us also inside the buildings to show technical solutions, for example to maintain thermal or acoustical comfort inside of it. The project, which I found of profound interest came from the office of a Spanish architect, whose project I could observe already before on the trip to Barcelona. Knowledge of the previous solutions implemented by him allowed me for more efficient analysis of this project in Zurich, which was one of the train and metro stations. The study brought me to a number of discoveries, which were often amplified because of the difference of the two studies – while the first one was in summer in a Mediterranean climate of Barcelona, not only the colder climate of Zurich, but also the fact, that our trip was in winter, emphasized differences between the two.

After coming back to Cardiff and finishing the report from the trip we arrived in Herford, where we were supposed to design the next, second term project. The project was of a workshop employing modern technology, like for example three dimensional printing. Taking into consideration what we learnt on the study trip in Zurich, in fact we couldn't only modernize the area, but also to fit its designed with the existing architecture. It was especially important, because our site was of significant historical importance to the city. The Museum, which existed there already exhibited over hundred years of waterworks serving the area long time ago. After discussing with the people working on the site we learnt a number of interesting features there. For instance we were told about flooding that occurred on the site fairly often, which could effectively prevent normal inhabitation, unless designed with consideration for this. Inspiration for solving this issue was a project seen in Zurich, which we were shown on one of Bays there. To prevent water access the interior there, poles were used, which lifted the building over flooding levels. Insight into the site allowed me also to see the shape of the terrain to blend the new architecture into it, as well as into the old waterworks museum found already on the site.

Unexpected problems came up in later conversation with the employees of the museum. Presented with the solutions they expressed their objective, due to losses in car park area, which they normally use for everyday commuting to work. In order to overcome this issue, the car park was split into two, while one part was moved, the other one was kept untouched, leaving necessary space for both, new development and the existing car park area.

In the middle of this project we were visited by a professor from Yale University, who helped us conduct lighting studies under her guidance. This led us to a new stage of our project, which was directed toward strictly technical aspects of architecture. In order to live up to the expectations set by this module, we needed to construct two lighting models, one physical and one digital. Afterwards we were directed to conduct lighting studies both physically and digitally using techniques presented by two groups of researchers. Successfully I managed to successfully complete this task by employing developed lighting study diagrams, which also followed the appropriate regulations in that region.

During this project I also had chance to represent my university in Manchester during the yearly meeting of ASN, which stands for Architecture Students Network. The trip was especially interesting for me due to the Mentorship program, from which students requested

me much about Manchester School of Architecture. The students very interested in studying in big city were additionally encouraged by the famous graduates from this school, among which were such famous people as Norman Foster. From these and other reasons I was very interested in taking part in this conference.

I was glad to meet many friendly students and have many opportunities to network with people from other universities. This year's organizer of the conference seeing my enthusiasm for their institutions invited me for further RIBA conference in London, which proceeded with elaborating on issue, which we firstly rose in the in Manchester. The character of this conference differed significantly from the previous one. While the first one involved students only, in London we were guests only, while the majority of the others were practicing architects, lecturers from universities, and mostly both. Conversations with them were fascinating and provided me with a number of insights into architecture in Britain. The importance of design, so embraced in school, was put into question, while documentations turned out to be significant part of everyday architects' work. Also it made me think about the area I should focus further in my education.

In the third term we were presented with set of projects, from which the one that appealed especially for me was organized in Barcelona-based school IAAC, which we visited before, and which offered comprehensive courses in computational design. An unexpected risk that came up during this project was during transportation of the piece we produced in Barcelona back to Cardiff. Because we needed to go through security on the airports, we had had to make sure that the objects we produced underwent airport regulations, as well as luggage size and weight limitations. In case of any problems our tutors equipped us as well with documents certifying that the objects we transported were under control of university. In the end we managed to dispatch and travel with our structures without any problems and after coming back to Cardiff we organized exhibition of our works, as part of the wider Welsh Festival of Architecture in Cardiff. Special interest during the festival enjoyed the group, which conducted its project in Cambodia and engaged with local communities, by working together and using materials found on the site.

A big event that was about to take place in our university in the second term was lecture with architect and professor in our school Jonathan Adams, who was the architect behind major cultural buildings in Cardiff. During his lecture he showed us projects he

worked on, since the very time he studied on university at our age. Because he graduated from Cardiff University, he was very bond with this school. After the lecture I had a chance to talk with him about his opinions on architecture and to learn his advices for young architects. After showing him my portfolio he proposed me doing summer internship in the architecture company he worked for. His offer made me glad, because I knew that this company was one of the biggest in Cardiff. After arriving to interview I talked with the director, who encouraged me for signing the contract for the whole summer. I realized that this may be a perfect opportunity to learn architecture from new point of view.

All the experience I gained by now assured me that architecture is the field, in which I could realize the passions and talents I was developing since the youngest age. I couldn't comprehend before how my creativity can find application in real profession and I am glad to think that I only started discovering it. Although I had to leave my home city, I am certain that in this way I gained opportunities of putting my future architectural projects into practice and thanks to this decision I won't be bound by neither geographical longitude nor latitude. Talks I could make with other students, tutors and architects helped me develop my own way of seeing the world and I am happy to think that there is still a lot that can change it and shape it. The places, where I visited and worked will serve me in future as inspiration for projects, which further place or scale I cannot yet imagine. Now entering the third year of my course I was repeatedly cautioned before hoe difficult and demanding it is, because of its either self-reliance or the unknown requirements of the tutors. First things first, this year is going to count the most to the overall assessment of our work and victory or failure will have influence on all my future career.

Although many things gave me chance to doubt in correctness of my decisions, there was yet nothing that could make me stop working hard and proceed pursuing success in the world architecture. Coming back to the noble imagination, which I kept in high regard since my earliest days I am certain, that I couldn't find a field of study, which allowed me to stay more faithful to it. All the experiences that I gathered on my way to Cardiff University let me be a more complete person and as much with the enthusiasm, as with determination to build my dreams.

2.4. Place woven with the moments of my life

Patrycja Łapińska

September, 2013

The year of matriculation has begun and every opportunity reminds us of upcoming exams, talks about a baccalaureate degree are so pervasive that the mere reference to the May events makes us all stressed, and me even more! Thinking about studying abroad doesn't let me sleep calmly, every day I ask myself how can I achieve this? But wait a minute, achieve what? Let's back up for a second to four years ago, because it was then that the idea of studying abroad came to my head, precisely in Spain. That was why I had chosen my high school profile and for three years consistently and painstakingly prepared to leave, mainly in terms of language. This decision was received very sceptically by my loved ones. "In three years she will change her decision" , "Once she wanted to be a veterinarian", and now "To Spain? You could also study in Poland". But I was so sure about my choice as nothing ever before. Strong-minded and determined, traits which were not previously attributed to me, because I was regarded more as a person with straw-like fervour. And that's how I got through the last year of high school, where I had already taken serious steps towards expanding my collegiate studies. This year haextremely intense, preparing for final exams, attempts to establish contact with the Spanish university, planning, calculating... Well, the calculation was the biggest problem, Spain is a country where education costs an arm and a leg, and I'm not made of money. So I began to looking out for scholarships, remembered the visit of the former pupil of our school, who talked about the scholarship called Fahrenheit, which for that moment was something so unattainable that even for a moment would not have thought to take advantage of this help. I thought then that this was an award for really talented people. At that moment I had no alternative, so stressed, I went to the main website of the City of Gdansk to refer to the criteria of scholarship. Along with continuing to read, my stress and fear passed. I began to realize that maybe I fit the profile of a grantee, but suddenly it turned out that a number of competitions in the field of language which I took part in become an asset and an argument to receive the scholarship. Furthermore, I had some nice grades, cool!, I thought.

May, 2014

Finals exams are finished! All the stress has passed, we can finally relax, the longest vacation was ahead of us! Beeeeeeep! Forget it Pati, not for you! A week after my final oral test I go to Barcelona to take the pre-selection test for my dream course, Translation and Interpretation with English, Spanish, French and Catalan. I had to pass the test of my abilities in English to being able to start to recruit. So many interesting, linguistic courses without any preliminary exams, but I always complicate my life, so Barcelona, I'm coming!

July, 2014

Exams already taken, now just waiting for the results. A few days after returning to Poland I get a message, I passed! Happiness, euphoria and a little bit of panic, the next step on my way to start University completed! Despite the passed English exams and graduating from high school, I still can not believe that I could do it. In my beliefs starting my studies abroad was so surreal, almost impossible, so many things to do.. For these moments my biggest opponent was paperwork and the time it had to be taken care of, it often complicated my actions.

Back to Spain, this time in the context of summer job, which was to be an alternative in case of not granting a scholarship (I was prepared for all the eventualities) In the course of arranging the endless amount of paperwork, translation of certificates, correspondence with university, submitting all the necessary documents and many others. Slowly, everything begins to clarify, all necessary documents have been translated, signed, sealed, sent, received, accepted.. it was strange that they didn't get lost on their way. Now I could only wait for the results, not very nice part of all this. After a few stressful days, the announcement of the results, at the same time I log into the appropriate portal, in my head float all the possible thoughts and scenarios. Page loads and loads and... I've done it again! I got admitted into the best, my ideal University, the one that I had dreamt about! Could I possibly ask for more? This stressful year, all those exams, all the difficulty to get to the point where I was.. suddenly, all of this seemed nice, not scary, and above all: it was worth the effort, because I was just making my dreams come true.

Euphoria hasn't passed, but there are more and more economic nature questions, I still don't know anything about the scholarship and I will be like that until the end of summer. But if

everything goes my way, I'm positive and ready to prepare the paperwork for the scholarship.

September, 2014

So it's been a year since I started? Time passes like crazy, a year ago at this time, I did not know how my life will look like and now I am back in Poland, waiting impatiently for the results of the scholarship. In my head, as always, all possibilities of what will happen. The news of the award of the bursary is received by my sister, whose face makes me think that I am extremely lucky. Relax, breathe, surely this scholarship is awarded to me? And what happens if they are wrong? I'm losing somewhere those senseless thoughts and I feel the happiest in the world to see how the tears of my proud mum are just falling into prepared salad.

The days go by and I'm really still hard to believe with everything that is going on around me. A few days before departure my feeling are mixed, the happiness of what awaits me connected with sadness caused by the same motive. Finally came the day of departure. I go to Spain in September to begin an intensive French language course. Upon arrival, the newly known people ask me if I am Mexican or whether I was born in Spain. These questions make me stupor, they are also surprised with my knowledge of Spanish. I explain that I was in a linguistic class and it's because of that I can speak it well. They are impressed by how good is our Polish education. They comment that we should have a high level of education. I'm not deceiving them, because they are right!

October -December, 2014

I'm starting the first trimester, did I mention yet that my university is the only one in country with such a division of the academic year? All ideas about studying abroad were gone, nothing actually was like I thought it would be. This diary is not about how it all comes easily to me without any worse days. It's worth mentioning that the beginnings of this new adventure I went through quite and in a bad mood. I had never suspected that it would react like this by going away from home. Everything new, university, language, country, food, people, rules, other mealtimes, different atmosphere, different constructed houses, strange rooms without windows and not tasty tap water, it's all nothing compared to the lack of family and friends who trouble so much. Suddenly, everything that I liked before in Spain was hated in a few moments.

I remember the first time I return home. Traveling by aircraft is rather one of the last items on my list of pleasant things. But this time was different, I took a seat by the window without thinking to watch everything from above. "I look at my city, I love it", just I remember that I had that song in my head watching from above beautiful, night Gdańsk. And I thought how much I owe him, how many happy years and above all the chance my city gave me study abroad, my biggest dream. Then I got an injection of energy and motivation for further work, study and realizations of my next dream, being a translator. This will be my way to thank to my town for what I got, worthy representing it abroad and to use all the opportunities I was given. I smiled to myself and I already had in mind a study plan after returning from Poland. And in the meantime I used the free days enjoying the stay at home, then even the autumn rain was the most beautiful. I visited beloved place, observation point in Oliwa and Gdansk, Old Town, I was proud of my beautiful old city, I wanted my Spanish friend to know some of his incredible story. It is definitely worth knowing!

I go back and get down to work. I think the rest of my life I will remember the first project I had to write, even the moment of submitting it was stressful. This uncertainty stemmed from my ignorance of the system of verification, the required criteria, I also did not know if my Spanish is good enough to write academic thesis. This homework consisted in analysing communication in a social group which we are not a part and which is new for us. I chose a nearby Islamic cultural centre linked to the mosque. The idea interested faculty and with the first task, the first success! We all know that when something goes well, we have the desire and motivation to continue to work! I was no exception, the first grade motivated me to work, calmed earlier fears and what can I say, i was working in full swing. The specificity of my university did not allow to have many free time, but I was very happy, load of work cause that homesickness was not so burdensome, my thoughts were occupied by learning and family support added wings and even more motivation. The library became my second home. It is one of the differences between Poland and Spain, here the students did not go to the home to study, everybody stay in a friendly and tailored to the learning library, which gave better results, allowed to focus and make a well use of our time.

Fiesta, siesta and mañana, in our country, those words would seem specify the nature of the Spanish, not very hardworking nation who like afternoon naps and weekend madness. Nothing could be further from the truth, at least not at my university, here we all worked very hard to achieve some good results. Spanish enthuse me with their system of work, which is based on giving the theory in the class and a lot of effort put into development outside school

hours, each on their own. "Pati come out of the library and go home now," said my mum laughing at 10 p.m, when the library was closing. She was a little bit scared and amazed in the same time. And so the whole trimester, which ended with a vernissage about known linguists, my group had an idea to show Zamenhof's productions, it turned out that no one had any idea about the achievements of the Polish linguist. With proud we created a poster and presented his life and works in the final exhibition. It was very important for me to enjoy such a occasions to promote the history of my country and silhouettes of Poles who somehow have changed the course of history. After all, I decided to bring this poster to Poland, give it my old school, I was very happy that the project created by my group could help other students to expand their horizons.

We were already at the halfway point, final exams was approaching. First trimester finals, three tests in a row and the same number of sleepless nights. Everything passed very quickly and I was back in Poland. Christmas and a little of rest at last arrived, and I was every day impatiently waiting for the exam results. First exams, first results and..? It's hard to believe, but this time it was also success. It is in those moments I do not regret a minute spent in my world built from books, I was very pleased that this effort has brought results. In the second trimester I came back with a double power, I wanted to see again the pride in my mom's eyes, acclaim and emotion in a voice of usually imperturbable grandfather, surprised face of grandmother and unsurprised with my results sister, who probably never doubted in me. But above all, I did it for myself, because it gave me great satisfaction. You might think that it's exaggerating and overreacting, at least I did not got the Nobel Prize, but every little success is worthy of attention and celebration, at least I had decided to treat my studies so.

Enjoying my visit in Poland, I went to my former school. I explained my choice and experiences related to it to one of the class, I wanted to share information about scholarship, because I also knew about it because of other student's story. I wish that one day some students from Gdansk will admit that I enthused them with an idea of studying abroad. Maybe one day it will be!

February- March, 2015

New year, new trimester, new challenges. And my provisions are: to pass spring exams, get into the dream university in France (obligatory exchange which awaits me next year) and taking part in my first Days of Science, it's the highest time to share with what you've learned

with people from Gdansk. I was very excited ! If someone thought that the previous trimester could be tough, it has not seen my face this time! I'm not complaining! A lot of work is associated with good results, and after studying hard, some rest taste even better! In this trimester started my the adventure with translation. It turned out that the translation process is much more complicated than I thought, but still, I loved it! My first text to translate was written in English by Polish lady professor from the University of Gdansk, that is why I made the task with great enthusiasm, every allusion to your native country when you are abroad is very exciting, at least for me!

Every time studying goes better, but probably you could ask yourselves, what with the homesick problem? Spending time in the library doing things that interest me occupied my thoughts, but I also had some different life than these associated with the university! The enormity of the wonderful people I have met, lovely Uruguayan and Moroccan girls made that even being 3000 km away from home, I felt happy . It is an amazing experience to meet so many people from so many different countries. I have never learned so many things in my whole life, like for those few months spent on my multicultural university.

Why description of this trimester is shorter? Nothing new happening in my life? No! I have just already acclimated to new things and understand the prevailing system in college, I met teachers, fewer things surprised me, everything seemed easier and more normal. Time flew quickly again, in some instants it was already march and the spring exams was coming. This time in front of me four attempts of skills and knowledge, you will do it, I comforted myself. I was right! all exams passed! I was still wondering if this luck that I have will end some day? My mother told me "is not luck but a hard work which gives this results". I recall all this hours in the library, and I thought in the spirit that she is right! It is true that the exams was over, but now I will have another challenge, also important, something that i treated very personally. Science Days are coming and I'm preparing my presentation about "How to communicate in the world of 6500 languages ?" And I can not wait to share it with other students!

On the day of the presentation I was a little nervous, but after all, I feel very good! I hope that my presentation was curious and interested others. I am determined to participate in the next Days of Science, I think it's a cool idea to scholars to presented their interests and skills to other people. Grate opportunity to promote science!

April-June, 2015

End of rest, I go back to university! They promised that the last trimester would be the easiest of all, for now they are keeping their word! Lighter in the Spanish version means just a normal, human trimester, without nocturnal marathons in the library! This time we translate from English to Catalan, I'm little bit worried, because me and a few other foreigners learn this language only for some months, but they say that we can do it so for now we keep our fingers crossed hoping that they are right. This is my last entry because we just arrived to the present, no more stories from the past. Now I'm just sitting and write my diary carefully recreating everything that has happened over these two years, I don't want to miss anything. I'm writing, and in the spirit I'm begging the next opportunity to could proudly say that again, I was lucky and I passed the final exams which start already in 10 days. For now, it is my goal, to pass the first year of study. My adventure and experience relating to studying abroad is not the longest, there is so many years of studying, adventures and new challenges waiting me. The only thing I can promise is that this is not the end of my story. For now, this is the path that I have chosen and what will be next? What are my plans for the future? Worthily represent my city and country, make that people associate him with all the best. Gdańsk, my city without borders. My city? At 100%, and forever! Without borders? For this town I write to you from Spain, and would write from any other place in the world, here there is no limits!

Year 2020

At 20 anniversary of Scholarship Fahrenheit I will explain you how it happened that I was a translator at the United Nations and Gdansk ambassador in the world, because it's my next goal which aim already started to come true 5 years ago, so far it is going good! See you!

2.5. Gdańsk, my place with no borders. Application regarding a living issue

Kamila Rudzińska

Gdańsk, 8th June 2015

Miss Milena Rudzińska

Gdańsk

Members of Scholarship
Committee (D.G. Fahrenheit's
Scholarship)

Wydział Rozwoju Społecznego
Urzędu Miejskiego w Gdańsku
Kartuska Street 5
80-103 Gdańsk

COMPLAINT AGAINST SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

I, Milena Rudzińska, daughter of Janusz and Elżbieta Rudzińscy, with Identity Card number ATY600290, would like to file a complaint against Scholarship Committee, whose responsibility is to administer the Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit's Scholarship. Above all I demand some explanations and answers to my doubts and would like to receive measurable help in my present situation. I realize that people whose experience is extremely different from mine might misunderstand me, still I ask for a little bit of empathy.

Before pointing out the essential cause of my complaint, I would like to announce some basic facts related to my personal life, as I consider them vital to my case. Since I have been born, I have been living in a quiet and beautiful part of Gdańsk called Wrzeszcz. For years I have been watching all the changes that were and are still being accomplished in my neighbourhood, but my thoughts were always heading far more, to other countries. My first connection to foreign cultures started by studying languages, first English at the age of nine, and then, some years later, Spanish. Despite short family trip to Italy, which I hardly remember, my first real journey abroad was in sixth grade of Primary School. I was chosen as a Polish member of the Children's Parliament of the World and spent four amazing days in

finnish city of Turku. Getting to know so many cultures, religions, points of view in such a short time have awakened my curiosity.

One year later I started to train windsurfing, which was from the very beginning connected to never-ending trips in search of any, even slightly hotter waters. I must admit it was a real privilege for such a young person to have an opportunity to visit so many european countries and, at least partly, understand them. Each competitor was representing him or herself a totally different and unknown reality, as he or she came from every corner of the world. Thanks to that, each time I was returning to Poland not only with medals and cups but also with a luggage full of memories, someone's stories, which at the end had the biggest value of all. Although I must say that these trips were too short to start missing home, too short to find new home somewhere there.

In High School I found myself completely immersed in spanish culture as I was attending bilingual class. At that moment my dream about studying in this remote country started to burst. Sadly, I knew it was an impossible dream. After my father died in 2006, together with my mother and siblings we were trying to manage, but it was not easy and certainly taught me how to look at the world without pink glasses. I realized that my dream would probably never come true. However one day somewhere out there a little light appeared and made the unreal, real. Here is where the Scholarship Committee entered the play. Their decision about giving me the scholarship have changed my whole situation, I could go and study in Spain without causing economic problems to my family.

Nevertheless the reality had little to do with my previous vision, and I was not informed about that before by people much more experienced and brighter than me. That is why I feel free to consider Committee as equally responsible for my stay in Spain, recognizing their obvious relation to my decision about leaving the country.

Therefore I consider the Committee as equally guilty of the consequences that my choice had caused. I would like to point out here the fact that if Committee had not given me the scholarship, I would not have had the possibility to leave the country, and I would have stayed calmly in Poland, studying in Gdańsk and escaping from all the problems related to my departure. I have an impression that Committee did not use all the opportunities to warn me and stop me from acting too fast. Nobody told me how different my life would be after spending five years in other country. I cannot stay indifferent being a part of this kind of desinformation.

To defend my case I would like to name some arguments which, I guess, speaks for themselves.

I came to Spain in 2010. My first few weeks in that country showed me that it had nothing to do with its stereotypical image. Of course, some facts were partly true, but most of them seemed deformed. I shall start with few simple examples which may be considered quite poor but in my Polish reality they turn into some serious problems.

First thing I would like to mention is climate. Everyone who have visited Iberian Peninsula during the high season knows what kind of temperatures he or she may expect. What makes things worse Valencia region is called *Spain's frying pan* by its own man. In consequence, on my way back for Christmas Holidays I usually had to fight with big temperature amplitudes, one's sometimes reaching thirty degrees. That is something even my well-trained by windsurfing body could not handle. I almost every time had to spend few days in bed blowing my nose.

Another enormous difference I have noticed was related to people. Spanish nation as a whole seems as always-smiling one, but at the same time it is really complicated to make any serious arrangements with them. The biggest problem is the *t-i-m-e*. Out there the famous *mañana* phrase is perfectly working, but is someting no-one in Poland can undestand, especially when there is a deadline in presenting any documentation. Take my diploma for an example. You can get the official, spanish one, after months if you are extremely lucky, but for the European version of it I'm still waiting and I guess nothing will change in the nearest future. It is punctuality which may be considered one of the least spanish virtues. Fifteen minutes of being late is an absolute minimum and nobody should feel offended by that. Why should he? Everyone knows that basic rule, so it seems logic to come one quarter later. It does not hurt anybody. Sincerely, everything would be fine if I stayed in Spain all the time, but as I come back to Poland I am expected to be always at the time previously agreed and my always-fifteen-minutes-late arrival is annoying everyone.

Next difference I would like to point out is a non-official relation between these people. Spanish do not really understand the meaning of the word *official*, official meeting, official language. I think I can risk saying that this world may be considered certain anacronism or at least it has nothing to do with spanish style. After years of calling my teachers, professors, bosses by their names, and names only, I feel rather strange when I come

back to Poland and try to be *superofficial*, if we are thinking about spanish definition of the word.

Language, that is another problem. When my personal notes are written in Spanish and Polish at the same time, my thoughts are bilingual, and during conversation with my Polish colleagues I come up with all no-polish words I cannot deny the fact that rather than knowing one more language, I may have lost all of them. It seems obvious in situations like when I say *gracias* while shopping in Galeria Bałtycka or answer *cześć* to my spanish, university friend.

All those factors, with many, many more that I did not mention, make me feel trapped between two so different worlds. In my current situation I have no choice but to file this complaint.

As a result of the decision of the Committee I was given a scholarship, I left my country and came to Spain. Thanks to that I got to know this completely different culture, only to realise that I know so little about my own. That to that I started sightsee this remote corner of Europe, only to discover how much I have to learn about my own backyard, both Gdańsk and Poland. Thanks to that I had an opportunity to meet so many brilliant people, from so many countries, only to leave them and miss them few years later. Thanks to that I came abroad, only to make sure how much I love my country, my city, my district, my home. The worst thing is that somewhere out there, in a little collage located at Plaza Horno de San Nicolas number four, I have found my place as well. The border between Valencia and Gdańsk disappeared completely, for me – it does not exist anymore. It is beautiful but sad as I could never be in two places at the same time. That is why when I am inside the Cathedral of Valencia, I would like to see Saint Mary's Church instead, that is why when I am sitting in a café on Piwna Street, I am missing spanish *tapas* so much. All because it always seems better where we are not. Maybe if I had stayed in Poland, I would have escaped from this nostalgia hidden somewhere in my heart? Maybe I would have lived in my small homeland not missing anything nor anyone? Maybe I would have been happier? Maybe everything would have been much easier? Or maybe not?

This complaint I would like to present in front of the Committee, hoping that each member will possess an ability to criticize him or herself and be truly objective.

Best regards,

Milena Rudzińska

2.6. On Gdańsk or the people for whom there are no borders

Magdalena Mastykarz

-Madam, the baby's pulse is uneven. Don't worry, we will give you some thiamine. There's a park close to the hospital, please take a walk and then come back, we will repeat the test.

- Is it serious?

- Sometimes the baby takes an incorrect position and it presses upon something. We'll see the reaction for the thiamine. Please, relax, the weather is beautiful. I'll see you in an hour.

It's the 7th of May, 1993. A sunny May day. This is the beginning of the story of the life of a girl, who crosses the first border in her life.

- Unfortunately, the pulse is still very uneven. I will send you to the hospital, you will have a full set of tests there and we will decide how to proceed.

Ambulance. Another CTG, the pulse still unstable. Ultrasonography. The doctor doesn't see any anomalies. Another KTG. The pulse doesn't change. The head of the obstetric ward decides to make a caesarean section. Dr. Wydra is the first human to lend the girl a helping hand and to show her the new world. At that time she didn't presume how many wonderful people she will meet in her life, who will show her the way and help in making important decisions. In spite of the umbilical cord being tied around her neck (the cause of incorrect pulse) Magdalena Barbara (the names chosen by her parents) is born in perfect health and gets 9 points on the Apgar score. Thanks to her parents and the general atmosphere at her home the world becomes an incredible riddle and a magical country, which little Madzia wants to explore more and more. As every child she is curious of new things. The thing, which distinguishes her from other children is the fact, that since the very childhood she has been surrounded by hospital. O no! Not because she was often ill! Also not because she was so brilliant to think of medical school at that age. Owing to the fact that her parents worked in the hospital she was more accustomed to it than other children. Syringe, stethoscope, latex gloves, white smock were all toys to her. You are all probably thinking now that, yes! That is why she wants to become a doctor in the future! Her parents inculcated in her interest for this area of science since childhood. Unfortunately, I have to disappoint you. Five – year old Magda was too small to understand anything her parents were talking about. Anything, regarding their work or medicine. Although she didn't want to be a princess or a singer, a thought of working in the hospital didn't even cross her mind. She loved animals very much

and she wanted to spend with them as much time possible. She didn't know what she will be doing in the future but she knew she had to be surrounded by animals.

7 in the morning. First day of school! Magda opens her sleepy eyes. She is not so eager to run to the first lesson. Elementary School no. 20 in Gdansk Brzezno. Reception class. She starts her educational adventure. In the very beginning of this long path she meets a great, full of dedication, teacher, who puts in all her strength and good intentions to guide the children into the world of school and education. Mrs. Grażyna Młynarska, the teacher of the 03 grade, throughout organizing many plays and various ways of activating the students and by being generous, patient and kind she warmed up the image of school for Magda and caused her to eagerly attend classes. Magda had an especially good memory. One night, when she couldn't fall asleep, she sat on her parents bed and started to recite all the roles in the 'Hansel and Gretel' play, in which she starred as Gretel. Her role consisted of 2 pages of A4 format.

As her education proceeded, Magda got more and more engaged in the life of her class and school. She eagerly took part in competitions and plays, but her life didn't only focus around school. Magda's hobby was swimming, which she perfected on the 'Start' swimming pool in Gdansk. Very often after swimming lessons her mother took her shopping to Main Gdansk. Madzia's mother, an amber lover, could never miss the most famous amber street in the city. Yes, that's right! Mariacka street was a regular place to visit during walks in the Old Town. Although the daughter wasn't as much interested in jewellery as the mother, she was always charmed by this small street. Old and beautiful houses made the place magical and delightful. Magda loved to visit the place once and again. At that time she didn't know that there were more places like this. Definitely she didn't think she will be studying in one of these place, far away from home. She solved the first unknown very soon, when in May 2005 she took part in organizing of 'The Second European Hansa Day'. During the preparations she found out that Gdansk is an old Hanseatic town, what was the Hanseatic League and that there are similar towns in other countries. For her contribution Magdalena received a diploma of acknowledgement from the Mayor of Gdansk, Paweł Adamowicz. She was very proud as it was her first diploma from the Mayor. She decided to visit at least one Hanseatic town in the future although she didn't plan to live in one...

As time passed by, she had more and more questions, also about education. More and more knowledge, new subjects, new skills. Magda loved science.

- Dad, we started a new topic, the human. Did you know that a human body consists of 206 bones? I have a test in 2 weeks.

- Oh! I know a poem which will help you to learn the bones of the wrist! A boat swims, Luna shines, a triple-sided pea rolls. These are the bones: boat-shaped, lunate, triquetrum, pisiform.

She knows the poem up until now, although she didn't use it during that science test.

In the sixth grade a new science teacher, doctor Justyna Kopecka, joined the teaching staff. She even more interested the girl in science. In order to help the pupils understand various processes she was bringing different gadgets, e.g.: to one class she brought a prism to show how a rainbow comes into being, to another she brought a deodorant to make the children aware how quickly particles of gas spread. She was always able to surprise her group. Those things could seem as simple, but for the six-graders, especially Magda, she was a temple of knowledge. One day the pupils asked her to bring her doctorate. Magda couldn't believe that the teacher was able to write such a fat book by herself and she decided that one day she will also write such a book. At the end of primary school Magda was honored by the Mayor's Scholarship. She was extremely proud – again. She was awarded by the Mayor himself. When her turn comes, a tall man with a smile on his face says: 'My wife's name is Magdalena, I like it very much' and awards her with a diploma. This is not the last time she will hear this from the Mayor.

Magda's parents helped her to chose a secondary school. They were very supportive and always proud of their daughter. They knew best that all awards, high grades and diplomas weren't a coincidence but hard work and giving up free time. They never forced their daughter to do anything. They always told their daughter that anything she learns she should do it for herself so the future will be easier for her. They never scolded her for anything, they were always a support. Also in this case. Magda and her parents staked on one of the best secondary schools in Gdansk - The John Paul the Second Junior High School no 18 – grade with an extended teaching program. New people, new environment and new teachers. Already in the first week of the school year the vice-headmistress informed of voivodship subject competitions, passing of which enabled the students excuse from school-leaving exams. 'I'd love to pass this competition, but I don't think it's possible. Primary school wasn't that difficult, I could be the best student, but this is junior high. Here true learning starts. I will learn the best as I can, but I have more subjects, higher level of education ...'- Magda was thinking. She didn't give up. She couldn't. Here she also met wonderful teachers, who helped her in developing her passions and interests. Her Polish teacher, Mrs. Barbara Gizewska conducted a drama class, which Magda attended very eagerly. With the band 'Such a Trio;

she participated in competitions and drama meetings, including: '5th Drama Meeting on the Adam Mickiewicz's death anniversary'.

Magda also cooperated with the school library, with which she organized the annual accolade for pupils of the 5th Primary School. She also participated in many German language competitions – German was her second best subject, right next to biology. A good knowledge of German, carried out from primary school made her the best in class. Magda was lucky that in the school that she had attended 2 languages were taught, English and German. She preferred the second one more, but she still loved biology more. Mr. Paweł Jodczyk, who himself was amazed and surprised by the fact how a human and nature function, how it all goes around, how many processes are in us and around us – and he was able to pass this fascination to his students. Our heroine was even more encouraged to get to know the human and the world of nature. He was running a biology club, to which Magdalena belonged. The classes didn't only take place in the classroom, but also in the park, in the woods, in the Beka reservation, where they watched birds and nature. The biology teacher also organized meetings with people, who, on daily basis, protect or watch nature. This was amazing! So much experience and knowledge! Not book knowledge, but live, perceptible knowledge, at a reach of a hand. Thank to this teacher one of Magda's biggest dreams came to life – she considered it impossible, but common work and effort bore fruit. Magdalena became a laureate of the Biology Voivodship Competition and was excused from taking the mathematical – science part of the school leaving exam. The joy! The pride! The luck! No words can describe it. Whatsmore, it was achieved owing to many sacrifices and dedication. Also this year she received the Mayor's scholarship and again she heard the statement about her name. She considered it very nice, as she herself liked her name very much and was always thankful to her parents for naming her like that.

The choice of high school is practically connected with the choice of higher education. Magdalena knew that. She also knew, that with the laureate's title she will be accepted into any chosen and dreamt of school. The thing she didn't know was what she was going to do in the future. Maybe medical school? Yes, she liked biology, she was fascinated by the human being, and she would be able to help others. In her mind's eyes she sees her parents – satisfied, smiling after work, but also very tired. They knew what it meant to work in a hospital.

- Baby, everything, but not medical school. It's not an easy job, especially for a woman.

- But I want to. Maybe I'll try. I can always resign.

- The patients and their families are getting more and more confrontational. Working in a hospital is not only treatment. It's really a hard job.

- But you are managing and you like it.

- Yes, but we want you to choose something easier. The choice is yours, we will always support you. This is only our advice and our guidelines.

Just like life determinism reached the main character in Zofia Nałkowska's 'Border', it also reached Magda. Although she never escaped from it, she wanted to be like her parents. They were role models for her. They were pushing her away from this determinism. They were trying to protect her, they were trying to set a protective border, which their daughter will cross, just like Zenon Ziembiewicz did. The difficult decision was made. Magdalena chose the 2nd comprehensive high-school in Gdansk. Magda goes to the secretariat to submit her papers.

- Biology laureate? So you will choose biological class?

The secretary is reaching for the biology portfolio.

- No. I want to apply for the bilingual class with extended German.

There was silence and consternation. Has love for German won over her love to biology? Already in the first year Magdalena took part in a biology competition and presented quite a knowledge on biology. Still, the thought of medical school was present in her head. At the same time the bilingual class gave her a possibility of acquiring a German certificate DSD II (Deutsches Sprachdiplom Stufe II), which guaranteed her studies abroad. 'Maybe I could combine these 2 things? Can I manage? It's so much work. Studies abroad are really expensive. How am I supposed to learn extended biology and chemistry? And other subjects? I need time for them as well.' Doubts, considerations, discussions with her parents, advice of her sister, and the decision was made. She will try. It will be hard, but maybe it'll work. The biology teacher, Mrs. Teresa Grygielska advised Magda to start an individual biology course, which she will be glad to conduct. Application to the headmaster's office, tests at the psychological and pedagogical clinic. Positive results. She did it! Magda starts an intensive biology course. She also attends a chemistry course, where together with the chemistry teacher, doctor Małgorzata Czaja, she is solving Matura tasks. The commitment and help of the teachers and the headmaster's office were enormous. Our heroine has never expected so much kindness. But she herself also put lots of work into achieving the set goal. She chose medical school consciously, aware of all the consequences. She knew that she will be working with ill people, who not only need treatment, but also understanding, empathy, warmth and patience.

Apart from biology and chemistry Magda didn't forget about German. In order to develop her skills she took part in a school exchange with Hannover. She also participated in the WIWAG project (Wirtschaftswochen-Aktiengesellschaft- the economics week – joint stock company), which was connected with a trip to Lubeck. She was enlisted for this project by her teacher, Bartłomiej Gniecioszek, who saw her commitment and extreme desire to learn the language. She was very happy when she found out she was going to this city. After all, it is one of the Hanseatic towns. She was even happier during her trip to Hannover. The German group, as one of the attractions, arranged a trip to Luneburg, which was also a Hanseatic town. Although she missed her home very much, at these town she felt like at home. Pretty houses along the water banks reminded her of Motława (river in Gdansk). In Luneburg there was also a crane, which made her feel even more like in Gdansk.

Inevitably, day by day, the Matura exam was coming. Together with it Magdalena was thinking of the costs of her foreign studies. How to apply? Where to look for a translator? Where will she find the money? She decided to turn for help to the Herder's Center in Gdansk, which is a inter-faculty unit of the Gdansk University. Its' aim is popularization of the German culture and language. There she met a man, who helped her go through piles of papers, translations and website registrations. A certified interpreter, Mr. Zbigniew Zembrzuski was always glad to help and give advice. Thanks to him Magdalena was able, without any problems, to submit all the papers in set dates and appropriate forms. Still, the problem of the money remained.

And also this time she met wonderful people on her way, who told her about the G. D. Fahrenheit Educational Scholarship, given by the Mayor of Gdansk. 'Mayor's Educational scholarship? What is it? What possibilities does it give? Can I get it? Do I stand a chance?' This scholarship was the first scholarship in Poland, which covered the costs of studying abroad. It was meant only for the most prominent and the most talented graduates of high schools. Was Magda such a student? She always worked hard and did everything to guarantee herself the best start in life. She gave priority to effort and deepening her knowledge over her passions and interests.

In her third year, in order to maximize her chances for receiving the dream scholarship she participated in the 'Jugend debattiert' ('Youth debates') and, with success, she represented Gdansk in the semifinals in Warsaw. Mrs. Ewa Korgul, the German teacher, who was also the author of the bilingual class, helped Magda to prepare for the debate on often difficult and controversial topics. Magda took part in the 4th Competition on the Knowledge on Safety 'Safe and friendly Pomerania' and she reached the finals. Participation in these competitions

not only brought her satisfaction, but was also a great way to practice the language and to get to know her own region better.

May 2013 came. She wasn't afraid of the Matura. She was stressed, of course, but she felt well prepared. So much studying and effort couldn't dissolve into thin air. First Polish, then Maths, Biology, Chemistry and Biology in German. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, Biology in German. Luckily Magda, as a student of a bilingual class, had the right to choose any subject and take the exam in German. A very pleasant exam, combining both Magdalena's passions. It wasn't her last test, but surely it was the *crème de la crème* among the exams. The last test was German and then oral exams, and then... vacation! Vacation? Not for a person, who is trying to get into a foreign university. Collecting papers, translations, post, stamps, frequent visits in the consulate and meetings with the translator. Registration on websites, looking for information, guidelines, advice. It took a lot of self-determination and patience, but the goal was closer and closer! This motivates, strengthens and helps.

First positive information. Zulassungsbescheid, that is confirmation of admission into medical school at the Rostock University. Why Rostock? Some of you will think – a Hanseatic town. Although it wasn't the main criteria, Magda was very happy that in a city, located hundreds of kilometers from home she will be able to feel like at home. Magda's high school German teacher recommended this university as one of the best medical schools in Germany. Trusting her judgment (she was German), Magda applied.

The goal is so close. Almost at a reach of the hand. It's time to submit papers, necessary for receiving the G. D. Fahrenheit's educational scholarship from the Mayor of Gdansk. 'The lady, who was accepting the papers, was very nice, but will it be enough? Will I get the scholarship?' The stress was huge. Fight for dreams and the future. The closer the announcement of results, the more stress. Magda picks up the phone. A moment of silence. 'Really? That's impossible! I'm so happy! Are you sure it's me? I'm so happy!' Joy. Tears. Shock. It's hard to express emotions. In life everything is possible, you just have to believe it. Thanks to the scholarship Magda goes to another trip of a lifetime. The city of Gdansk, the Scholarship Chapter and creator of the scholarship, Mayor Paweł Adamowicz become doctor Wydra. They make a caesarean section, give Magda a helping hand and open a window to the world for her.

Studies in Rostock - medical school abroad – are not easy. It's constant learning, work and effort. Still, they bring our heroine so much joy and they absorb her so much that sometimes she forgets about fatigue and pre-exam stress. Finally during anatomy class she could use the poem which her Dad taught her. She combined 2 passions, just the way she wanted – love for

the human being and for the German language. Areas so far away from each other, yet so close. Being abroad she didn't forget about her small Motherland. She eagerly talks about Gdansk and encourages people to visit it, with success. She also invites students from Gdansk to visit Rostock and the University. The students of the 5th High School gladly followed her suggestion.

Apart from learning, our heroine meets many new wonderful people, who not only show her how it is to live in Germany, but also in other countries. They extend her horizons and show her, how differentiated life can be. In order to not to be in their debt Magdalena tells them about Poland, her home city of Gdansk and of the wonderful people she met in her life.

Gdansk is not only beautiful houses, the Motlawa river, amber. It is people. People make places, to which you want to come back to. The little girl's home town is such a place. She will always eagerly talk about it, and even more gladly, return there. It's a great place. If you want it to be beautiful, Dear Reader, you have to be beautiful yourself, because you create this town yourself. You are a part of it and you are responsible for it. Magdalena Barbara, that's how her parents called her, is a proud citizen of Gdansk. She is proud that there are people here, who opened her eyes and opened a window to the world. They showed her that there are no borders, and if there are any, you can always overcome them with the help of others.

2.7. Gdańsk with no borders: water, 60% body weight and a special place in the heart

Anna Petruczyńnik⁷

I close my eyes and take a deep breath. I can smell water and salt that cleans my respiratory system. I breathe out. I can feel the breeze across my face and the sun leaving a tan on my body. Breathe in. I hear the sound of the water and the rustle of people chatting and laughing while they walk around me. I breathe out. Under my feet, there is warm, soft sand. A last breathe in and I open my eyes. I am by the Ocean in Portugal, and in New Jersey in United States. I am on the beach in Barcelona and Normandy, in the bay in Rome and Karlskrona at the islands in Crete and Malta. I am by the water, I am at home, I am in Gdańsk.

My first memory, I am 4 years old, as I was told a lot later. We are camping in Italy close to Rome. There is a small kid's swimming pool, as big as an ocean for me. However, I want to swim in the adult pool. My dad took me there. I could not see the bottom of it, and I

⁷ The honourable in the competition „Gdańsk, my place with no borders”, 2015 edition.

was kept close to the edge watched closely by my parents at all time. Despite all that, the joy was so unbelievably strong that it became my first memory. I knew, somewhere under my skin that the water will play a big role in my life.

I am 5 years old. I am walking with my parents side by side in a search of the perfect spot at the beach in Brzeźno. The sand rocks inside my shoes hurt my little feet. The backpack with a plastic bucket and shovel weights down, but the grownups relentlessly walk further and look for the place for us. I don't understand; the sand and the sea are the same everywhere on the beach. After few more minutes we finally find a spot close to the water. I throw away my backpack and run, to the water. I can feel the ground getting harder on every step towards water I take. I have a wide smile on my face when I see the waves coming in and out, and...I run in the air caught by my dad – suns cream. It is the worst irrational torture of the every beach day. Ready to go, I come back again by the water, this time with the sister watching over my safety. Three steps towards the water and then a quick run away from the wave – the same sequence all day long. During breaks, we are eating delicious sweet buns from Szydłowski and we are building a castle. A monumental building is erected by two little girls, future engineers, and a proud daddy, an engineer. Our talent has been spotted by the photographer. The next day we can enjoy watching our faces and the beautiful construction in the daily newspaper *Dziennik Bałtycki*.

There is a starting block and 25 meters of water before the other edge of the swimming pool in front of me. I am 9 years old; I am in Ciechanów at the swimming championships. My club, coach and parents are sitting in the bleachers cheering me up. First whistle; I come forward closer to the block and splash myself with a little bit of cold water. Second whistle, I step on the starting block, my world shrinks to a line at the bottom of the pool and the steady water. People's voices die down, "take your mark" *ding!* My body gets tight muscle by muscle as I jump to the water. In the water there is only one goal, make it to the other wall. My hands are moving slightly above the water line. Breathe in and breathe out. Both hands hit the wall, and now I can look around. YES! I did it! My sense of hearing is coming back. I see my parents screaming and waving at me. Can there be a greater achievement than finishing a 25 meters swim? I feel a cold medal on my skin. It is the first one in a newly started collection.

I am standing on an unusual weight. It shows how many kilograms of the body weight come from water. I am inside the human body at the exhibition in The Museum of Natural

History in London. I am 12 years old; I am discovering human anatomy and the importance of water for a living organism. I go from an organ to an organ through the tracks of gastrointestinal and circulatory systems. I push through the people to get to the command deck – the brain. It is stunning how his little pink structure created mostly from water was able to develop thoughts and therefore build civilizations. The electric signals transferred from neuron to neuron enable me to think about it. There are so many questions I want to ask, and only so much time to find answers. Fortunately, my parents found me. I can go and show them the display about the rules of genetics and explain them why I have green eyes.

I am 15 years old, and never have I ever swum on a sailboat. I guess, this is the right time to change it. I come down to a little cabin of a six-people boat with my high school friends. We leave the shore in Ostróda for a 5 days long school trip in Mazury. We have sailing and doing some math in our plans. White cloths are waving in the wind and I am sitting in the bow. Right there I see the entire lake. I feel free with the wind blowing into hair. I am sure I will be back here soon.

Tap, tap, tap, the rain drops are dripping at the window in my room. It is typical fall weather in Gdańsk. A cup of hot tea and some delicious sweets are on my desk next to my computer. Me, wrapped up in the blanket is sitting and surfing the internet. My brain is filtering the immensity of the information. “Ding” – you got new email. In the same house, a floor below me my father is surfing the internet too and he found something worth sharing. Neither of us have any idea, that few months later, because of that link I will apply to an American university. I had no idea that this rainy afternoon is going to change my life.

My head hurts from the amount of processed information. I am 18 years old; it is a warm evening in Hoboken New Jersey. It is my first week in United States, first week of college and the first week of an independent life. The stress caused by the language change, new environment and the cultural shock is going away as I sit on a bench looking at the city on the other side of the river. I can see the lights of New York City, the center of the world and my dream place to visit. I cannot believe that I am here fulfilling my greatest dream. The flickering lights create an almost unreal view of this lively and vigorous city. I will never get bored of this incredible view.

I am waiting for a mark. There is 2000 meters in front of (or technically behind) me. I am 19 years old; I am at the river in Philadelphia at my first big regattas in college. In our 4+ crew there are girls with whom I trained hard the entire season for this moment. In our heat

there are, among others, Lafayette and Penn State crews. The boats are lined up, rowers ready to go, coxswains are silent. Start! „ ¾, ½, ½, ¾, length in, full, POWER 10!” Our bodies swing together; we can hear the noise of oar locks locking in before they go into water and other coxswains giving instructions. “UP THE PACE!” I am staring at the back of the person in front of me. However, from time to time each of us looks right at the other boats. We have a chance! “ROW TOGETHER, HEADS IN THE BOAT!” Push and swing, push and swing. The wind and the water splash helps me stay on top of it the in the 30 degree Celsius weather. 500 meters to go. The legs are burning, we have some troubles staying straight and keeping the right timing. “HERE WE GO GIRLS, IT IS TIME FOR SPINT, GIVE ME ALL YOU HAVE”! I count down the strokes in my head, each and every one more powerful from the previous one. We feel as one strong moving body. Oars in, push, oars out, recovery, repeat. “LAST 10! And 1,....2!...” We finished! Half a boat length and we would make it to finals, but none of us care. We made it, the race felt amazing. I put my hand, with bubbles from pulling the oar handle, into the cold river water. That was a beautiful race; I am ready for the next season. Next time for real, not as a novice, but as a varsity athlete. Next year we beat this river.

I have finished my freshmen year at Stevens. The time to take a break and chill finally came. I am in one of the American Parks on the border with Canada. We are walking with my mom shoulder to shoulder next to a swift river. We are getting closer to a source of noise. Gallons of water are coming down the 50 meter high waterfall making a breathtaking view. This is the Niagara Falls. The water splash creates a wet breeze and the drops of water run down my face. I close my eyes and I take a deep breath.

The whole story started almost 20 years ago in Gdańsk. I was born in Wrzeszcz and raised in Zaspá and Siedlce. I have always liked looking at the sea from the pier and thinking about the big ships leaving to Sweden. The sea breaks the artificial border set by the signs “Gdańsk”. However, those tables were never a border to me. They were sighs indicating “Home”. It is thanks to this home and its wide variety of possibilities that I could have taken off into the world. But one never forgets the smell and the taste of home. I breathe out and in again. I am at the edge of the world, in the world with no limits. The wind whips across my face and the sounds of water fill my ears. I feel free. My body recalls the way it felt in different places in the world. My soul is speeding up through the ocean, seas and rivers. I am back at my place. I am home. I am in Gdańsk. I open my eyes and I can see the Canadian side of the monumental waterfall. I am ready and excited for what the life will bring next.

2.8. Gdańsk, my place of freedom

Agnieszka Rzeźniowiecka

Gdańsk always reminded me of freedom: initially historical, then – personal. A couple of years ago the dream of studying at a prestigious, foreign university existed in my head along other dreams of super powers or well-fitting sunglasses – unattainable.

The fact that I could apply for a Fahrenheit Scholarship came to my knowledge quite late – in the second year of high school. My dream – studying Psychology at an internationally renowned university – finally saw some glimmer of hope. During my holidays I got in touch with a dozen or so universities. Each and every one of them required me to pass a Matura exam in Biology (or a different hard science subject) on an extended level. As a student in humanities class I therefore decided to learn three years worth of Biology material in a single year and to pass the Matura at 80%. Thanks to my achievements at the Literature and Polish Language Olympiad as well as my glorious teacher I transitioned into a personal learning course, which allowed me to spend more time on studying Biology. I studied on the train to school, at classes, breaks, during meals, even at the gym (thanks, audio books!). My family gave me weird looks during the Christmas Eve, as I started to compare the Christmas tree to nervous system. I sat my first mock paper without even learning half of the curriculum and got 45%. Being absolutely broken, I asked my Biology teacher for another chance and a few months later I managed to get 90% from the next paper. I passed the actual exam slightly above 80% - this fulfilling the requirements of every university I applied to.

I chose to study at the University of Birmingham as it was very important for me to be taught by internationally renowned experts in their fields – Psychology at Birmingham is in this regard on the same level as Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Shortly afterwards, I was woken up by a phone informing me that I was granted the Fahrenheit Scholarship – it was one of the most beautiful moments in my life. I flew to Birmingham in the end of September. I fell in love with my university at first sight. I fell in love with the Old Joe – the highest standalone clock tower in Europe – for being my North Star and guiding my way when I was lost with a friend during my first weeks there. I fell in love with the old, brick buildings – they reminded me of the architecture in Gdańsk and made me feel at this new place like at home.

Every English university can boast of hundreds of extraordinarily, or slightly less so, weird societies: from Tea Appreciation Club, to the Stargazing Society, to the Harry Potter Club.

My love for the written word pushed me and my Polish friend to start a new, Polish section of a popular student magazine, *The Linguist*. Each time I published an article about Poland or Gdansk, I received messages from students of different nationalities - about how they felt inspired by Beksinski's art or much more down-to-earth questions, such as where to buy Goldwasser (every student requires bread and circuses, though).

My first-year modules focused on the biological mechanisms underlying the brain and on statistics. My lecturers genuinely loved the subjects they were teaching us about - it was not uncommon for a group of students to go for a post-lecture coffee with the lecturer and discuss the material. Each student was also assigned a personal and academic tutors who were always extremely helpful with any question I had.

I also started to work as a research assistant - in the beginning, I was doing stuff a well-trained chimpanzee could probably do as well. With time came more responsibility and my duties became challenges - I managed huge databases and analysed fMRI scans. The research projects made me more and more fascinated with the human brain. At this time I started thinking about the Science Days - an event allowing students to share their knowledge and experiences with younger pupils, and hopefully igniting the love for science in them. To put my plan into practice, I contacted Hewelianum. Hewelianum helped immensely with forming a precise plan of the event and hosted the first edition in the end of September last year. The event was a success even though some schools normally did not organise educational trips at the beginning of the school year.

I used my second year of studies to build on my first-year achievements - I worked with more and more demanding research projects (although some required me to stare at people who were trying to rescue a plastic duck with ribbons and duct tape), I wrote more, and I participated in some extra-curricular modules that developed my leadership, teamwork and creativity. Thanks to those modules, I was awarded the Personal Skills Award. More importantly, I met some amazing people there.

In the spring, the second edition of the Science Days in Hevelianum took place. Almost three hundred pupils took part and some travelled a long way to Gdansk just to listen to us talking about all things science we found fascinating. This edition taught me that every idea can be developed into a great initiative which can potentially change somebody's life plans and at least guarantee great entertainment.

A few weeks ago, a lecturer from the School of Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences, Dr Sang-Hoon Yeo, invited me to take a leading role on an eye-tracking and perspective-taking project. The results can be of vital importance to the video game industry and marketing strategies. In order to undertake this project, I was awarded a research bursary from my university. I am also now planning the third edition of the Science Days with Hewelianum.

Thank you so much, Gdansk. Thanks to you, I am making my dreams a reality.

Fahrenheit Grant Winners

– author biographies

Magdalena Bielecka (1994) finished secondary education in 2013 at the 5th Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk.

She has held a grant from the President of Gdańsk's Fahrenheit Scholarship since 2013 when she commenced her studies at the University of Vienna's Centre for Translation Studies (subject: Transcultural Communication).

Through studying, she is developing her interest in foreign languages and the cultures of English- and German-speaking countries, while expanding her linguistic and meta-communication skills.

After studies, she intends to work in the field of transcultural communication in a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

Samuel Kozłowski (1994), graduated from the 3rd Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk in 2013.

Since then a Fahrenheit Scholar and student of Mathematics at Cambridge University.

After a short romance with physics and applied mathematics, his current interest is pure mathematics in the broadest sense.

He dreams of doing an MA in Mathematics in his current place of study and doesn't dare to think any further into the future.

Daniel Krajnik (1994), finished secondary education in 2013 – 3rd Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk.

Has been a Fahrenheit Scholar since 2013, when he began to study Applied Art (subject: Architecture) at Cardiff University.

Through studying, he is developing his interest in the use of computer programming in the process of architectural design.

After studies, he intends to work in an architectural office and to further develop his abilities as a designer.

Patrycja Łapińska (1994), finished secondary school in 2014 – 15th 'United Europe' Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk.

Has been a Fahrenheit Scholar since 2014, when she began studying languages (subject: Translation and Interpreting) at Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona.

Through studying, she is developing her interest in foreign languages and issues concerning translation and interpreting.

After her BA studies, she intends to continue studying and to work as a translator of Polish, French, English, Spanish and Catalan.

Magdalena Mastykarz (1993), finished secondary school in 2013 – II Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk.

Has been a Fahrenheit Scholar since 2013, when she began medical studies at Rostock University's Faculty of Medicine.

Through studying, she is developing her interest in human medicine and technological progress in diagnostic radiology.

After university, she intends to work as a specialist doctor and to continue her studies on the subject of diagnostic technology in medicine. She is considering a doctorate at Rostock University.

Anna Petrucznik (1995), finished secondary school in 2014 – Gdańsk Autonomous Secondary School.

Has been a Fahrenheit Scholar since 2014, when she commenced her studies in Electrical Engineering at the Stevens Institute of Technology.

Through studying, she is developing her passions in theoretical mathematics, electronics and chess.

After university, she plans to see the world by travelling and then to start work in the field of designing and programming electronics and in-built systems. She is considering getting involved in scientific research into quantum computers and their algorithms.

Milena Rudzińska (1991), finished school in 2010 – 15th Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdańsk.

Was a Fahrenheit scholar between 2010 and 2015, first studying History of Art and later Identification, Analysis and Management as part of a Cultural Heritage course, both at the University of Valencia.

In 2015 she began her doctoral studies in History of Art at the University of Gdańsk and she hopes to reconcile her studies with her passion for languages, of which she knows a few – apart from Spanish and English, she is learning Italian and French.

She is also an unusually active person who does many sports, and she works, amongst others, in the theatre and in the National Museum in Gdańsk.

Agnieszka Rześniowiecka (1994), finished secondary school in 2013 – 3rd Comprehensive Secondary School in Gdynia.

Fahrenheit scholar since 2013, when she started Psychology studies at Birmingham University.

Her studies are developing her knowledge of the structure, function and biochemistry of the human brain.

After her BA studies, she intends to go on to do an MA in neuroscience or psychology . She sees her future in science and in Gdańsk.

CITY OF GDAŃSK
and the Grant Jury of the Mayor of Gdańsk's
Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship

Gdańsk, 24 February 2015

COMPETITION APPEAL

In connection with the 10th anniversary of the Mayor of Gdańsk's Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit Academic Scholarship, the Grant Jury announces a

COMPETITION

funded by the City of Gdańsk and open to grant holders from the last ten years for a biographical work written in both Polish and English, entitled:

Gdańsk, moje miejsce bez granic

Gdańsk, my place with no border

Winners will receive prizes or commendations.

Please submit your entry by **8 June 2015**

by email, using *Praca konkursowa* in the subject line, to:

bogumila.bieniasz@gdansk.gda.pl

The Competition organiser, without claiming copyright of the authors' texts, reserves the right to publish them.

Competition entries will be scrutinised by the Jury and analysed by a scientific Research Team headed by Professor Dr. hab. Maria Mendel. The analyses will lead to the selection of the winners, with a book to be published containing a selection of competition entries.

The results of the Competition will be announced and the award-giving ceremony will be held in the second half of 2015.

Jury Chairman
Mayor of the City of Gdańsk
Paweł Adamowicz