

KULTURA CONNECT MAGAZINE

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Site of Surprises

A remarkable place with wondrous origins

Shanghai: City of Diversity

Take a look around the host of the 2010 World Expo

Rising Waters

Worrying scenes from the Polish floods



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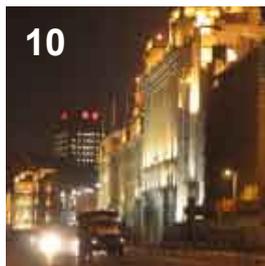
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Cover Photo
Nanjing Road, Shanghai, by
Tomasz Swiatek

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DEAR READERS

DRODZY CZYTELNICY

When we travel, we make discoveries. Our eyes are opened to cities in faraway countries: cities that rush towards the future while being mindful of the past (pages 8-10). We encounter great individuals and learn about their lives (page 3). We find small surprises that lead to great miracles (page 5). We also recall the worries of those affected by pressing dangers (page 4). Hopefully, the journey through this edition of the magazine will also result in many discoveries, great and small.

Gdy podróżujemy, dokonujemy odkryć. Poznajemy nieznaną nam miasta w dalekich krajach: miasta, które pędzą ku przyszłości, a jednocześnie pamiętają o przeszłości (str. 8-10). Spotykamy wielkie indywidualności i dowiadujemy się o ich życiu (str.3). Znajdujemy małe niespodzianki, które prowadzą do wielkich cudów (str. 5). Pamiętamy również o tych, którzy zatrwożeni są bieżącymi zagrożeniami (str. 4). Mamy nadzieję, że podróż po tym wydaniu czasopisma przyniesie również kilka odkryć, wielkich i małych.



Through the Lens: A Watery Calamity

Property underwater, 20 people dead, millions of *złoty* in damage: as if Poland needed any more tragedy. After a catastrophic plane accident on April 10, in which the former Polish President, Lech Kaczyński, and 95 key figures died in western Russia, the country had to struggle through its worst floods in decades. Heavy spring rains forced the evacuation of thousands and left some villages looking like conflict zones.

Breaking its banks. These photos of the Wisła (Vistula) river in Warsaw capture the extent of the flooding, as well as nearby residents' lucky escape from the waters.

W obiektywie: Wodny kataklizm

Posiadłości i mienie pod wodą, 20 ofiar powodzi, miliony złotych strat: Polska nie potrzebowała więcej tragedii. Po katastrofie lotniczej 10ego kwietnia w zachodniej Rosji, w której zginął były Prezydent RP, Lech Kaczyński, oraz 95 ważnych osobistości, kraj musiał zmagać się z najgorszymi powodziami na przestrzeni kilku dekad. Rzęsiste wiosenne deszcze zmusiły do ewakuacji tysiące osób i spowodowały, że niektóre wioski wyglądały jak strefy wojenne.

Rzeka wylewająca się z brzegów: te zdjęcia Wisły pokazują zasięg wezbranej rzeki w Warszawie oraz pobliskich mieszkańców, którzy tym razem szczęśliwie uniknęli tragedii.

Images: Krzysztof Hildt
Foto: Krzysztof Hildt





Divine Construction

A shrine in the United States has a special link with South America

It has stood through 10 winters and summers: a decade of cold, cloudy nights, and hot days with bare skies. The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville, Alabama, can be found in a secluded part of the countryside, surrounded by a river and rolling hills.

Home to the Poor Clare Nuns of Perpetual Adoration, the Shrine is a hallowed place of prayer. Visitors are asked not to speak during their visits. Photography is not allowed. Tourists are awed by the building's magnificence, and profoundly moved by the contemplative experience.

Jean Brandau, a Protestant visitor, was overwhelmed during his visit. Afterwards, he reflected on *About.com*: "At first I viewed the monastery as just another tourist attraction. I was upset that I would not be able to take pictures inside. By the time we left, I was completely awestruck and realized that pictures wouldn't do the temple justice anyway."

Although this decade-old shrine itself is magnificent, the story of its establishment is even more remarkable. It goes back to a singular nun and her special visit to South America in 1995.

Mother M. Angelica, the foundress of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), was visiting Bogotá, in Colombia, as part of a business trip. A Salesian priest, Father Juan Pablo Rodriguez, led her and the nuns with whom she was traveling to the Sanctuary of the Divine Infant Jesus.

Four years later, in a broadcast on her television show *Mother Angelica Live*, she recounted the moment that she entered the Sanctuary. "Well, I walked in, and this church was huge," she told viewers. "In the middle of this huge church was a huge courtyard. In fact, about 2,000 people stood there, and we had Mass, standing, in that courtyard."

"In the corner, I saw a bust of a priest. And I thought: 'I wonder who he is?' And I walked over there and, to my shock and surprise, it said 'Father John Rizzo.' And I couldn't believe it, because my father's name was John Rizzo."

The discovery of the statue was only the first surprise. Mother learned that Father John Rizzo – in Spanish, Padre Juan Del Rizzo – was Italian, also like her father. When he came to Colombia, Rizzo decided to turn to the Child Jesus, because his task of collecting donations for a new church was proving fruitless. After he entrusted his efforts to the Divine Child, the funds were gradually found. The cornerstone for the church was laid in 1937. Although it was finished in 1942, plans were developed in 1989 to expand the existing structure, as so many of the faithful were attending services.

The goodness of Father Rizzo and his devotion to the Child Jesus proved wondrous from the outset. When he said Mass, Father would talk to the statue, asking the Divine Child to help the impoverished people. The Child certainly answered. Many miracles, many healings took place; many more have taken place since. The



faith of the people grew and, today, thousands have a profound devotion to the Divino Niño, the Divine Child.

Mother Angelica and her companion nuns went to see the original statue after Mass. What happened next was astonishing: “I was just standing there, looking at him, and all of a sudden... he became real. And he turned towards me... My heart was beating a hundred miles an hour, because I didn’t expect it. And he looked at me with the most awesome eyes you ever want to see.” Jesus then spoke to Mother with the voice of a child, saying: “Build me a temple, and I will help those who help you.”

Mother started to cry. Her sisters came to comfort her, but she was worried. As she recalled: “We were hard up at the [television] network, let alone build a temple, and I didn’t know what the word ‘temple’ meant, because I’d never heard a Catholic church called ‘temple’.” Mother knew that she had to do something, though.

When she and the sisters travelled to Italy a few months later, Mother noted that Saint Peter’s Basilica was described as “this temple”. She said, jokingly, “wow, I hope you’re not asking for something this big”. However, from that moment, she knew what Jesus had meant.

When they returned to America, she and the sisters searched for land. After several months, having looked nearly everywhere, they were prepared to give up. Then, her real estate agent

suggested that he might have one more place; so, with another sister, she and the agent drove to the location. Immediately, she knew that it was the right place; it had “a presence of God about it” that she had never felt anywhere else. Another event confirmed her thoughts. As Mother recalled: “One of the sisters was with me and she was going down to the river (the river surrounds it; it’s like a peninsula) and she found, on the ground, a rock and it had a cross on it.” After months of searching, the quest was over. “Well, this is it,” she said with relief.

The nuns did not have a penny for the project. They never tried to raise funds for it, either.

Construction on the shrine and monastery began in July 1996. On the shrine’s official website, Mother describes her experience in building the ‘temple’: “I never in my wildest dreams thought it would be so beautiful. ... At every turn He [our Lord] would change it. It got bigger and bigger, and more and more beautiful. We were going to put just ordinary floor tile in the Church; He guided us to put in marble. In every possible way He intercepted some of our ideas, and we could see what He wanted.”

The nuns did not have a penny for the project. They never tried to raise funds for it, either. Five families, which wanted to remain anonymous, were inspired to give financial aid. As the official website astonishingly indicates, “the Child Jesus kept His promise to ‘help those who help you’.”

On December 3, 1999, the nuns moved into Our Lady of the Angels Monastery. Sixteen days later, the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament was solemnly consecrated. The occasion was “a

- 1 A walkway at the Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Hanceville, Alabama. By House Of Sims, Flickr, Attribution 2.0 Generic, (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/houseofsims/3377343267/sizes/l>)
- 2 The medieval-style monastery, home to the Poor Clare Nuns of Perpetual Adoration. By House Of Sims, Flickr, Attribution 2.0 Generic, (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/houseofsims/3377451389/sizes/l/in/photostream>)
- 3 The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. By bronayur, Flickr, Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic, (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bronayur/138767492/sizes/l>)

moment of singular joy” for everyone present, but most of all for Mother Angelica and the nuns.

Dr. James Hitchcock, a Professor of History at St. Louis University, wrote afterwards in the *Adoremus* bulletin that, in the crowded church, “among those in the front pews were the executives, with their families, of the various Alabama companies involved in the construction of the church. None of them appeared to be Catholic, but all of them appeared to follow the ceremony intently and reverently”.

One more miraculous event left a subtle, though important, mark on the place. Several years ago, a severe storm damaged the stone cross that stands on the monastery. The top had been cleanly cut off, leaving a ‘T’ shape. Mother Angelica discovered that this Tau Cross, as it is known, was the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, meaning “God Among Us”. Also, in the Bible (in Ezekiel 9:4), it signified God’s favour and protection. It was the sign of the thirteenth-century Italian preacher Saint Francis, as well.

Mother Angelica, sensing God’s divine hand at work, left the ‘accidental’ T as it was. This artifact of weather damage now crowns the medieval-style monastery – started by a single visit to the southern hemisphere – and stands proudly before hundreds of visitors and pilgrims who visit the site every year, seeking contemplation and peace.

By Lukasz Swiatek





SEEKING SHANGHAI

This modern metropolis has not forgotten its past

Bustling, pulsating, growing: this dynamic city has always been evolving. An international centre of trade and commerce, Shanghai is showing itself off to the globe this year as the host of the 2010 World Expo. Already, the event is setting records: as the most expensive and largest world fair ever held. The theme, "Better City, Better Life," reflects humankind's wish for better living in future urban environments.

The city is certainly mindful of this idea. Only a decade ago, certain sections were still farmland. The Pudong district, a case in point, is now a "towering metropolis with wide boulevards [and] multimillion-dollar condominiums", notes *Harvard Magazine*. At night, the area's skyline glitters with an array of buildings, among them the iconic Oriental Pearl Tower and the Shanghai World Financial Center.

Skyscrapers may be increasingly colonising the city, but the flame of the past has not dimmed. In the 1920s, the city was known as "the Paris of the East, the New York of the West". Many architectural treasures, inspired by British, French and American styles, were constructed around this time. The Shanghai Club in the Bund area was originally a red-brick, three-

Ta nowoczesna metropolia nie zapomina o swojej przeszłości

Tętniące, pulsujące, rosnące: to dynamiczne, rozwijające się miasto nieustannie się przeobraża. Jako międzynarodowy ośrodek przemysłu i handlu, w tym roku Szanghaj prezentuje się światu w roli gospodarza Światowego Expo 2010. Wydarzenie już bije rekordy jako najdroższa i największa na świecie tego rodzaju wystawa, jaka kiedykolwiek się odbyła. Tegoroczny temat,

„Lepsze miasto, lepsze życie”, odzwierciedla pragnienie ludzkości doskonalszego życia w środowiskach miejskich w przyszłości.

Szanghaj z pewnością wprowadza tę ideę w życie.

Jeszcze dziesięć lat temu, niektóre obszary miasta były polami uprawnymi. Dzielnica Pudong, dla przykładu, teraz jest „kolosalną metropolią z szerokimi alejami [i] mieszkaniami o wartości milionów dolarów”, pisze *Harvard Magazine*. W nocy lśnią zarysy budynków, a wśród nich spektakularna wieża Oriental Pearl Tower oraz Shanghai World Financial Center.

Wprawdzie wieżowce coraz bardziej dominują w mieście, lecz płomień przeszłości nie wygasa. W latach 20ych, miasto było znane jako „Paryż wschodu, Nowy Jork zachodu”. Wiele



3



4

storey, building; demolished and rebuilt in 1910, it assumed a neo-classical style and featured Sicilian marble. Other treasures, such as the Asia Building and the art-deco style Broadway Mansions, form part of the city's diverse architectural landscape.

During these 'grand days', the city's distinct image was fostered by other developments, too. The first motion picture screening in China took place on August 11, 1896; between that year and 1945, the city became the centre of Chinese cinema. The first animated film – *Out of the Inkwell*, produced by Max Fleischer – arrived in Shanghai from the United States in 1918.

Predating these buildings and trends, though, are many older sites. The town of Zhujiajiao, dubbed 'Shanghai's Venice', was founded about 1,700 years ago. The water town is crossed-crossed by many rivers and features hundreds of antique buildings. Other landmarks, such as the Yuyuan Garden – established in 1559 – also testify to the fact that the heart of this city beats with a marvelous, persistent, historical pulse.

- 1 Nanjing Road, Shanghai's main shopping street
Ulica Nanjing, główna ulica handlowa Szanghaju
- 2 An iron lion statue in the Yuyuan Garden
Pomnik lwa z żelaza w Ogrodzie Yuyuan
- 3 The Customs House in the Bund District
Budynek izby celnej w dzielnicy Bund
- 4 A pond in the peaceful Yuyuan Garden
Staw w zacisznym Ogrodzie Yuyuan

Serce tego miasta bije cudownym, trwałym, historycznym pulssem.

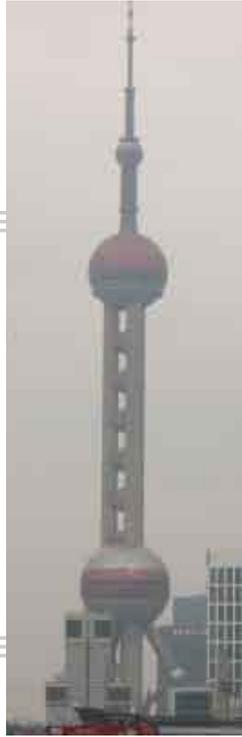
skarbów architektonicznych, zainspirowanych brytyjskimi, francuskimi i amerykańskimi stylami, zostało zbudowanych właśnie w tym czasie. Trzypiętrowy Shanghai Club w dzielnicy Bund pierwotnie był budynkiem z czerwonej cegły, a następnie został zburzony i odbudowany w 1910 roku w stylu neo-klasycznym z wykorzystaniem sycylijskiego marmuru. Inne skarby, takie jak Budynek Azji, oraz Rezydencje Broadway w stylu art-deco, również stanowią część zróżnicowanego architektonicznie krajobrazu Szanghaju.

Podczas tych „dni świetności”, charakterystycznemu wizerunkowi miasta sprzyjały także i inne wydarzenia. W dniu 11 sierpnia 1896 roku w Chinach odbył się pierwszy

pokaz filmów, a następnie od tego roku do roku 1945, miasto stało się centrum chińskiej kinematografii. Pierwszy film animowany – *Out of the Inkwell*, wyprodukowany przez Max'a Fleischera – przybył do Szanghaju ze Stanów Zjednoczonych w 1918 roku.

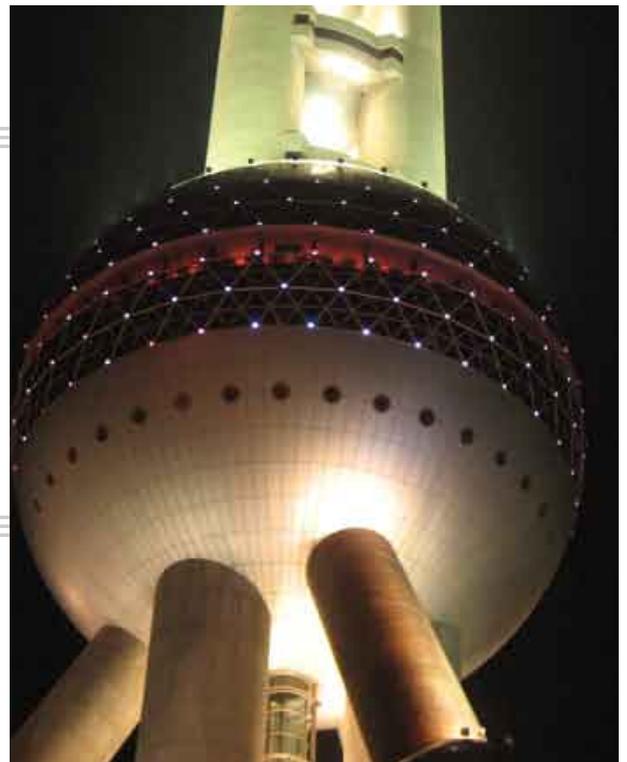
Obok tych nowszych trendów i budowli, napotykamy też obiekty o długiej wielowiekowej tradycji. Miasto Zhujiajiao, nazywane „Wenecją Szanghaju”, zostało założone około 1,700 lat temu. Ta miejscowość na wodzie poprzecinana jest wieloma rzekami i szczyci się setkami zabytkowych budynków. Inne pamiątki z przeszłości, jak n.p. Ogród Yuyuan – założony w 1559 roku – również świadczą o tym, że serce tego miasta bije wspaniałym, trwałym, historycznym tętnem.

Images (2009) by Tomasz Swiatek



SHANGHAI SIGHTS

Images (2009) by Tomasz Swiatek





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